

PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

(11)Publication number : 2001-326867
 (43)Date of publication of application : 22.11.2001

(51)Int.Cl.

H04N 5/445
 G06F 17/30
 G11B 27/10
 H04N 5/44
 H04N 5/76
 H04N 7/025
 H04N 7/03
 H04N 7/035

(21)Application number : 2000-141796

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(22)Date of filing : 15.05.2000

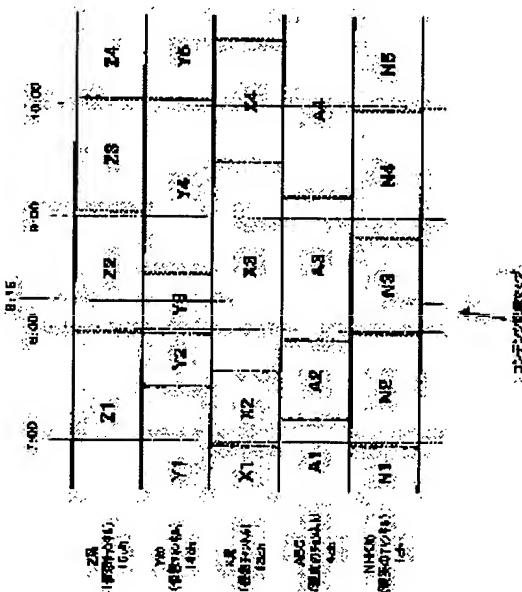
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(54) CONTENTS RETRIEVAL/EXHIBIT SYSTEM AND METHOD, AND SOFTWARE STORAGE MEDIUM

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a contents retrieval/exhibit system and method by which a user can retrieve contents from many contents recorded and stored in a storage device with excellent operability.

SOLUTION: Each of the recorded contents is classified into virtual channels and contents are arranged on an actual or virtual time base by each virtual channel. Thus, setting a virtual channel in the Y axis and the time base in the X axis each of recorded contents is assigned on a two-dimensional plane. In other words, an address for optional recorded contents can be designated by moving a cursor in 4 upper/lower/left/right directions so as to allow a user to easily select and operate the contents.





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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] Contents reference / presentation system which is characterized by providing the following and which searches record contents from the random and accessible recording device which stored much contents, and is shown to a user. A contents classification means to classify each record contents on the aforementioned recording device according to a predetermined rule. The channel allocation means which assigns a virtual channel for every classification. A contents array means to arrange the record contents classified by each classification on the corresponding virtual channel. A contents presentation means to answer the user operation through a user operation means to receive the channel selection operation by the user, and the contents look up operation on a channel, and the aforementioned user operation means, and to take out and show record contents from the selected virtual channel.

[Claim 2] It is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 which the aforementioned contents array means arranges each record contents on a time-axis according to the order of presentation on a virtual channel, and is characterized by what the aforementioned contents presentation means takes out record contents for from the place to which only the part according to the amount of contents look up operation on the virtual channel chosen with the aforementioned user operation means moved the time-axis top.

[Claim 3] The aforementioned user operation means includes the 2nd directions means which directs the 1st directions means which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, and the control input of the 2nd direction. The aforementioned contents presentation means Contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by what a virtual channel is specified according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions means of the above 1st, and the record contents on this virtual channel are specified for according to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions means of the above 2nd.

[Claim 4] For the directions means of the above 2nd, the aforementioned contents presentation means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 3 characterized by what record contents are taken out for from the place to which only the part receive the depression operation by the user and corresponding to the depression time of the directions means of the above 2nd moved the time-axis top of a virtual channel.

[Claim 5] The aforementioned contents presentation means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 4 characterized by moving within the record contents under presentation in a presentation place if the depression time of the directions means of the above 2nd is under a predetermined value, and moving between record contents in a presentation place if this depression time is beyond a predetermined value.

[Claim 6] It has a receiving means to receive the program contents under televising from one or more broadcasting stations. furthermore, the aforementioned channel allocation means A real channel is assigned for each [which can receive] broadcasting station of every. the aforementioned user operation means Channel selection operation in which a real channel and a virtual channel are not distinguished is received. the aforementioned contents presentation means The program contents under present televising which answered the user operation through the aforementioned user operation means, and was taken out from on the selected real channel, Or contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by what the record contents taken out from the selected virtual channel are shown for.

[Claim 7] The aforementioned user operation means includes the 2nd directions means which directs the 1st directions means which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, and the control input of the 2nd direction. The aforementioned contents presentation means A real channel or a virtual channel is specified according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions means of the above 1st. Contents reference / presentation system according to claim 6 characterized by what the record contents on this virtual channel are specified for according to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions means of the above 2nd.

[Claim 8] The aforementioned user operation means contains the numerical-keypad group which specifies a channel number. the aforementioned channel allocation means While assigning the channel number assigned to the broadcasting station which corresponds to each fruit channel An intact channel number is assigned to a virtual channel by the real channel. the aforementioned contents presentation means Contents reference / presentation system according to claim 6 characterized by what contents are taken out for from the real channel corresponding to the numerical keypad specified on the aforementioned user operation means, or a virtual channel.

[Claim 9] The aforementioned contents classification means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by performing record contents for a classification, filtering, etc. based on a user's taste or profile information etc.

[Claim 10] The aforementioned contents array means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by performing the order determination of presentation of each record contents on a virtual channel, priority attachment, etc. based on a user's taste or profile information etc.

[Claim 11] Contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by storing image contents and the multimedia contents which consist of multimedia data and its reproduction application program on the aforementioned recording device.

[Claim 12] On the aforementioned recording device, the multimedia contents which consist of multimedia data and its reproduction application program in addition to image contents are stored. The aforementioned channel allocation means assigns a virtual channel for every reproduction application program. the aforementioned contents array means On the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned Each multimedia data is arranged in the order reproduced by this

reproduction application program. the aforementioned contents presentation means It answers that multimedia data were chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. Contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by what this reproduction application program is started and these multimedia data are reproduced for.

[Claim 13] On the aforementioned recording device, multimedia data, metadata, and the multimedia contents that consist of the reproduction application program are stored. The aforementioned channel allocation means assigns a virtual channel for every reproduction application program. the aforementioned contents array means On the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned The group of each multimedia data and metadata is arranged in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program. the aforementioned contents presentation means It answers that the group of multimedia data and metadata was chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. Contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by what this reproduction application program is started and the group of these multimedia data and metadata is reproduced for.

[Claim 14] The aforementioned contents presentation means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 13 characterized by answering that multimedia contents were chosen on the virtual channel assigned to the reproduction application program, and starting reproduction of default multimedia data and metadata without the waiting for an input.

[Claim 15] The aforementioned contents presentation means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 which once moves from a virtual channel to other channels, and is characterized by resuming presentation of contents from the time of only the part in which the real time passed on this virtual channel moving when it has returned.

[Claim 16] The aforementioned contents presentation means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 which once moves from a virtual channel to other channels, and is characterized by resuming presentation of contents from the time of being interrupted by movement of this channel when it has returned.

[Claim 17] The aforementioned contents presentation means is contents reference / presentation system according to claim 1 characterized by showing on a screen the mark which shows the reproduction start time, the reproduction time, and/or the reproduction position of each program on the time-axis on each virtual channel.

[Claim 18] The contents reference / presentation method which is characterized by providing the following and which searches record contents from the random and accessible recording device which stored much contents, and is shown to a user. The contents classification step into which each record contents on the aforementioned recording device are classified according to a predetermined rule. The channel allocation step which assigns a virtual channel for every classification. The contents array step which arranges the record contents classified by each classification on the corresponding virtual channel. The contents presentation step which answers the user operation through the user operation step which receives the channel selection operation by the user, and the contents look up operation on a channel, and the aforementioned user operation step, and takes out and presents record contents from the selected virtual channel.

[Claim 19] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by what each record contents are arranged on a time-axis according to the order of presentation on a virtual channel, and record contents are taken out for from the place to which only the part according to the amount of contents look up operation on the virtual channel chosen with the aforementioned user operation means in the aforementioned contents presentation step moved the time-axis top at the aforementioned contents array step.

[Claim 20] The aforementioned user operation step contains the 2nd directions step which directs the 1st directions step which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, and the control input of the 2nd direction. At the aforementioned contents presentation step, a virtual channel is specified according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions step of the above 1st. The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by what the record contents on this virtual channel are specified for according to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions step of the above 2nd.

[Claim 21] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 20 characterized by what the depression operation by the user is received at the directions step of the above 2nd, and record contents are taken out for from the place to which only the part according to the depression time of the directions means of the above 2nd moved the time-axis top of a virtual channel at the aforementioned contents presentation step.

[Claim 22] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 21 characterized by moving within the record contents under presentation at the aforementioned contents presentation step in a presentation place if the depression time in the directions step of the above 2nd is under a predetermined value, and moving between record contents in a presentation place if this depression time is beyond a predetermined value.

[Claim 23] It has the receiving step which receives the program contents under televising from one or more broadcasting stations. furthermore, at the aforementioned channel allocation step A real channel is assigned for each [which can receive] broadcasting station of every. at the aforementioned user operation step Channel selection operation in which a real channel and a virtual channel are not distinguished is received. at the aforementioned contents presentation step The program contents under present televising which answered the user operation through the aforementioned user operation step, and was taken out from on the selected real channel. Or the contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by what the record contents taken out from the selected virtual channel are shown for.

[Claim 24] The 2nd directions step which directs the 1st directions step which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, and the control input of the 2nd direction at the aforementioned user operation step is included. At the aforementioned contents presentation step, a real channel or a virtual channel is specified according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions step of the above 1st. The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 23 characterized by what the record contents on this virtual channel are specified for according to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions means of the above 2nd.

[Claim 25] The aforementioned user operation step includes the user input through the numerical-keypad group which specifies a channel number. at the aforementioned channel allocation step While assigning the channel number assigned to the broadcasting station which corresponds to each fruit channel An intact channel number is assigned to a virtual channel by the real channel. at the aforementioned contents presentation step The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 23 characterized by what contents are taken out for from the real channel corresponding to the numerical keypad specified at the aforementioned user operation step, or a virtual channel.

[Claim 26] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by performing record contents for a classification, filtering, etc. at the aforementioned contents classification step based on a user's taste or profile information etc.

[Claim 27] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by performing the order determination of presentation of each record contents on a virtual channel, priority attachment, etc. at the aforementioned contents array step based on a user's taste or profile information etc.

[Claim 28] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by storing image contents and the multimedia contents which consist of multimedia data and its reproduction application program on the aforementioned recording device.

[Claim 29] On the aforementioned recording device, the multimedia contents which consist of multimedia data and its reproduction application program in addition to image contents are stored. At the aforementioned channel allocation step, a virtual channel is assigned for every reproduction application program. at the aforementioned contents array step On the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned Each multimedia data is arranged in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program. at the aforementioned contents presentation step It answers that multimedia data were chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by what this reproduction application program is started and these multimedia data are reproduced for.

[Claim 30] On the aforementioned recording device, multimedia data, metadata, and the multimedia contents that consist of the reproduction application program are stored. At the aforementioned channel allocation step, a virtual channel is assigned for every reproduction application program. at the aforementioned contents array step On the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned The group of each multimedia data and metadata is arranged in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program. at the aforementioned contents presentation step It answers that the group of multimedia data and metadata was chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by what this reproduction application program is started and the group of these multimedia data and metadata is reproduced for.

[Claim 31] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 30 characterized by answering that multimedia contents were chosen on the virtual channel assigned to the reproduction application program at the aforementioned contents presentation step, and starting reproduction of default multimedia data and metadata without the waiting for an input.

[Claim 32] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 which once moves from a virtual channel to other channels, and is characterized by resuming presentation of contents from the time of only the part in which the real time passed on this virtual channel moving at the aforementioned contents presentation step when it has returned.

[Claim 33] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 which once moves from a virtual channel to other channels, and is characterized by resuming presentation of contents from the time of being interrupted by movement of this channel at the aforementioned contents presentation step when it has returned.

[Claim 34] The contents reference / presentation method according to claim 18 characterized by showing on a screen the mark which shows the reproduction start time, the reproduction time, and/or the reproduction position of each program on the time-axis on each virtual channel at the aforementioned contents presentation step.

[Claim 35] So that contents reference / presentation processing which searches record contents from the random and accessible recording device which stored much contents, and is shown to a user may be performed on computer system It is the software storage which stored the described computer software physically in computer-readable form. the aforementioned computer software The contents classification step into which each record contents on the aforementioned recording device are classified according to a predetermined rule, The channel allocation step which assigns a virtual channel for every classification, The contents array step which arranges the record contents classified by each classification on the corresponding virtual channel. The user operation step which receives the channel selection operation by the user, and the contents look up operation on a channel, The software storage characterized by providing the contents presentation step which answers the user operation through the aforementioned user operation step, and takes out and presents record contents from the selected virtual channel.

[Claim 36] The software storage according to claim 35 characterized by what each record contents are arranged on a time-axis according to the order of presentation on a virtual channel, and record contents are taken out for from the place to which only the part according to the amount of contents look up operation on the virtual channel chosen with the aforementioned user operation means in the aforementioned contents presentation step moved the time-axis top at the aforementioned contents array step.

[Claim 37] The aforementioned user operation step contains the 2nd directions step which directs the 1st directions step which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, and the control input of the 2nd direction. At the aforementioned contents presentation step, a virtual channel is specified according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions step of the above 1st. The software storage according to claim 35 characterized by what the record contents on this virtual channel are specified for according to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions step of the above 2nd.

[Claim 38] It has the receiving step which receives the program contents under televising from one or more broadcasting stations, furthermore, at the aforementioned channel allocation step A real channel is assigned for each [which can receive] broadcasting station of every. at the aforementioned user operation step Channel selection operation in which a real channel and a virtual channel are not distinguished is received. at the aforementioned contents presentation step The program contents under present televising which answered the user operation through the aforementioned user operation step, and was taken out from on the selected real channel, Or the software storage according to claim 35 characterized by what the record contents taken out from the selected virtual channel are shown for.

[Claim 39] The aforementioned user operation step includes the user input through the numerical-keypad group which specifies a channel number. at the aforementioned channel allocation step While assigning the channel number assigned to the broadcasting station which corresponds to each fruit channel An intact channel number is assigned to a virtual channel by the real channel. at the aforementioned contents presentation step The software storage according to claim 39 characterized by what contents are taken out for from the real channel corresponding to the numerical keypad specified at the aforementioned user operation step, or a virtual channel.

[Claim 40] On the aforementioned recording device, the multimedia contents which consist of multimedia data and its reproduction application program in addition to image contents are stored. At the aforementioned channel allocation step, a virtual channel is assigned for every reproduction application program. at the aforementioned contents array step On the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned Each multimedia data is arranged in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program. at the aforementioned contents presentation step It answers that multimedia data were chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. The software storage according to



claim 35 characterized by what this reproduction application program is started and these multimedia data are reproduced for. [Claim 41] On the aforementioned recording device, multimedia data, metadata, and the multimedia contents that consist of the reproduction application are stored. At the aforementioned channel allocation step, a virtual channel is assigned for every reproduction application program, at the aforementioned contents array step On the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned The group of each multimedia data and metadata is arranged in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program, at the aforementioned contents presentation step It answers that the group of multimedia data and metadata was chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. The software storage according to claim 35 characterized by what this reproduction application program is started and the group of these multimedia data and metadata is reproduced for.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[The technical field to which invention belongs] this invention relates to reference / presentation system and the method of record contents which take out the contents recorded on videotape and accumulated beforehand from storage to storage, and relates to reference / presentation system and the method of videotape-recording contents for making a user choose from the record contents of a large number recorded on videotape and accumulated at storage especially.

[0002] Furthermore, in detail, this invention relates to reference / presentation system and the method of record contents for a user discovering contents with sufficient operability to storage out of the record contents of a large number recorded on videotape and accumulated, and relates to reference / presentation system and the method of record contents for discovering contents by operation equivalent to the channel selection in a common television set especially.

[0003]

[Description of the Prior Art] It becomes possible to accumulate AV data which consist of an image or voice in large quantities without degradation by development of a digital technique. It enables HDD with dozens of GB or the capacity beyond it to receive comparatively cheaply recently. The videotape-recording machine of the HDD base is also appearing (for example), "a TV program Refer to appearance" (28 No. the Nikkei electronics, 727 and pp.27- 1998) or "HDD **** digital videotape-recording technology appearing still more towards a home" (46 No. the Nikkei electronics, 727, pp.41- 1998) for the device recorded on videotape to HDD one after another.

[0004] HDD is equipment in which the random access to record data is possible. Therefore, when reproducing videotape-recording contents, it is not necessary to reproduce the program recorded on videotape sequentially from a head like [in the case of the conventional video tape], and direct reproduction can be started from a favorite program. On the other hand, when many programs are accumulated with large-capacity-izing of HDD, it should begin to see from which program to the beginning, or a user can afflict the head to selection of contents.

[0005] Charts, such as title information acquired from EPG (Electric Programming Guide : electronic program guide) in order to choose conventionally the contents recorded on VTR etc., and record time of contents, are displayed, and there is a method which a user is made to choose. Furthermore, in order to help an understanding of contents, there is also the method of displaying thumbnail. However, when based on this kind of method, if a user wants to come to rechoose contents, he has to return to the first selection screen in detail, and contents reselection operation is troublesome. Moreover, a user needs to master the operating instruction of a selection screen and work burden is excessive.

[0006] Moreover, classifying beforehand was also performed in order to carry out choice of the recorded contents to preparation. Moreover, classifying contents hierarchical has also been taken in positively. However, it becomes unclear in which classification or hierarchy the target contents are located as a hierarchy becomes deep. On the other hand, when a hierarchy is shallow, the number of the contents belonging to one classification turns into a large number, and there is a problem of being hard coming to search within a classification.

[0007] Moreover, the method of sorting contents is also mentioned. However, if the user does not know the attributes (for example, a title, record time, etc.) of the contents to which sorting is given to some extent, it is seldom helpful. A user's burden will become excessive if the number of contents to accumulate increases.

[0008] On the other hand, in a computing system, application which can treat a desired data file first can be chosen and started, and a data file can be further chosen in an application window. Or the application which can start a data file and this is registered beforehand, by choosing a desired data file on an Explorer screen, corresponding application can be started and a data file can be opened. In any case, coordinate designating devices, such as a mouse, or the file and application of a request by the cursor key can be chosen on the so-called GUI (Graphical User Interface) screen.

[0009] However, when it is going to introduce into television or other AV equipments the GUI operation format established on such a computing system, it will be necessary to add the new mechanism for application selection, and increase of device cost will be caused. Moreover, the user who does not use a computing system will need to memorize a completely new television operating instruction, and operability may fall rather.

[0010] Contents selection can also be regarded as operation similar to the channel selection on a television set. In the conventional television set, operation of the vertical (+/-) key on remote control and a numerical keypad can perform channel selection. Moreover, the exclusive key different from channel selection is arranged by FF (rapid traverse) in VTR etc., REW (rewind) and a skip forward, and skip back WORD. Since in other words the key of exclusive use is assigned for each function or every command, the number of keys increases in vain by expansion. Also in remote control of the type which uses the so-called cross-joint key, the cross-joint key is assigned to neither channel selection nor movement before and behind a reproduction position.

[0011]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] The purpose of this invention is to offer outstanding reference / presentation system and the outstanding method of record contents which can take out the contents recorded on videotape and accumulated beforehand from storage to storage.

[0012] The further purpose of this invention is out of the record contents of a large number recorded on videotape and accumulated at storage for a user to offer outstanding reference / presentation system and the outstanding method of record contents which can discover contents with sufficient operability.

[0013] The further purpose of this invention is to offer outstanding reference / presentation system and the outstanding method of record contents which can discover record contents by operation equivalent to the channel selection in a common television set.

[0014]

[Means for Solving the Problem] this invention is made in consideration of the above-mentioned technical problem. the 1st side It is contents reference / presentation system or the method of searching record contents from the random and accessible recording device which stored much contents, and showing a user. The contents classification means or step into which each record contents on the aforementioned recording device are classified according to a predetermined rule, The channel allocation means or step which assigns a virtual channel for every classification, The contents array means or step which arranges the record contents classified by each classification on the corresponding virtual channel, The user operation means or step which receives the channel selection operation by the user, and the contents look up operation on a channel, It is contents reference / presentation system or the method characterized by providing the contents presentation means or step which answers the user operation through the aforementioned user operation means or the step, and takes out and presents record contents from the selected virtual channel.

[0015] With the record contents said here, image contents, such as a program broadcast from for example, each broadcasting station, are recorded on videotape.

[0016] The aforementioned contents array means or a step may arrange each record contents on a time-axis according to the order of presentation on a virtual channel. In such a case, the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step can take out record contents from the place to which only the part according to the amount of contents look up operation on the virtual channel chosen at the aforementioned user operation means or the step moved the time-axis top.

[0017] Moreover, the aforementioned user operation means or the step may contain the 2nd directions means or step which directs the 1st directions means which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, or the control input of a step and the 2nd direction. In such a case, the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step can specify the record contents on this virtual channel according to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions means or step of the above 2nd while specifying a virtual channel according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions means or step of the above 1st.

[0018] For example, a cross-joint key is applicable to a user operation means. In such a case, while assigning the 1st direction to the navigation key of the vertical direction, you may assign the 2nd direction to the navigation key of a longitudinal direction. In such a case, a user can perform contents look up operation intuitively using an vertical and horizontal cursor key on the program schedule developed on the two-dimensional flat surface which consists of the upper and lower sides and right and left.

[0019] Moreover, you may make it the directions means or step of the above 2nd receive the depression operation by the user. In such a case, you may make it the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step take out record contents from the place to which only the part according to the directions means of the above 2nd or the depression time of a step moved the time-axis top of a virtual channel. for example, the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step will move within the record contents under presentation in a presentation place, if the directions means of the above 2nd or the depression time of a step is under a predetermined value (for example, movement/switch of the scene within the videotape-recording program under reproduction), and if this depression time is beyond a predetermined value, it will move between record contents in a presentation place — it may make like (for example, movement in the videotape-recording program of order)

[0020] Contents reference / presentation system or the method concerning the 1st side of this invention may be further equipped with the receiving means or step which receives the program contents under televising from one or more broadcasting stations. In such a case, the aforementioned user operation means or a step can receive channel selection operation in which a real channel and a virtual channel are not distinguished because the aforementioned channel allocation means or a step assigns a real channel for each [which can receive] broadcasting station of every. Moreover, the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step can present the program contents under present televising which answered the user operation through the aforementioned user operation means, and was taken out from on the selected real channel, or the record contents taken out from the selected virtual channel.

[0021] moreover, when the aforementioned user operation means or a step contains the 2nd directions means or step which directs the 1st directions means which directs the control input of the 1st direction at least, or the control input of a step and the 2nd direction While the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step specifies a real channel or a virtual channel according to the control input of the 1st direction by the directions means or step of the above 1st According to the control input of the 2nd direction by the directions means or step of the above 2nd, the record contents on this virtual channel can be specified.

[0022] Moreover, the aforementioned user operation means or the step may contain the numerical-keypad group which specifies a channel number. In such a case, the aforementioned channel allocation means or a step can assign an intact channel number to a virtual channel by the real channel while assigning the channel number assigned to the broadcasting station which corresponds to each fruit channel. Moreover, contents can be taken out from the real channel corresponding to the numerical keypad specified at the aforementioned contents presentation means, the aforementioned user operation means, or the step, or a virtual channel.

[0023] Moreover, the aforementioned contents classification means or a step may be made to perform record contents for a classification, filtering, etc. based on a user's taste or profile information etc. Moreover, the aforementioned contents array means or a step may be made to perform the order determination of presentation of each record contents on a virtual channel, priority attachment, etc. based on a user's taste or profile information etc.

[0024] Moreover, on the aforementioned recording device, the multimedia contents which consist of multimedia data and its reproduction application program in addition to the image contents which come to record a program on videotape may be stored. In such a case, the aforementioned channel allocation means or a step may assign a virtual channel for every reproduction application program, and the aforementioned contents array means or a step may arrange each multimedia data in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. And the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step answers that multimedia data were chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned, starts this reproduction application program, and you may make it reproduce these multimedia data.

[0025] Moreover, multimedia contents can also consist of the reproduction application program with multimedia data and metadata. In such a case, while the aforementioned channel allocation means or a step assigns a virtual channel for every reproduction application program, the aforementioned contents array means or a step may arrange the group of each multimedia



data and metadata in the order reproduced by this reproduction application program on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned. And the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step answers that the group of multimedia data and metadata was chosen on the virtual channel to which the reproduction application program was assigned, starts this reproduction application program, and should just reproduce the group of these multimedia data and metadata.

[0026] Moreover, the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step answers that multimedia contents were chosen on the virtual channel assigned to the reproduction application program, and you may make it start reproduction of default multimedia data and metadata without the waiting for an input.

[0027] Generally, at the time of - purchase, nothing is still recorded on the recording device at the time of shipment. If the static state of the waiting for an input is shown when a certain channel is chosen for the first time, different unnatural feeling from the case where channel change operation is performed in the usual television set etc. will be memorized. The natural feeling of a channel change can be given to a user by showing dynamic contents using default data.

[0028] Moreover, the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step once moves from a virtual channel to other channels, and when it has returned, you may make it resume presentation of contents from the time of only the part in which the real time passed on this virtual channel moving. Or the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step once moves from a virtual channel to other channels, and when it has returned, you may make it resume presentation of contents from the time of being interrupted by movement of this channel.

[0029] Moreover, you may make it the aforementioned contents presentation means or a step present on a screen the mark which shows the reproduction start time, the reproduction time, and/or the reproduction position of each program on each virtual channel (refer to drawing 16). A televiewer can grasp intuitively and visually the schedule advance situation and the viewing-and-listening situation of self on a virtual channel according to a mark on such a screen.

[0030] Moreover, the 2nd side of this invention So that contents reference / presentation processing which searches record contents from the random and accessible recording device which stored much contents, and is shown to a user may be performed on computer system It is the software storage which stored the described computer software physically in computer-readable form. The aforementioned computer software The contents classification step into which each record contents on the aforementioned recording device are classified according to a predetermined rule, The channel allocation step which assigns a virtual channel for every classification, The contents array step which arranges the record contents classified by each classification on the corresponding virtual channel, The user operation step which receives the channel selection operation by the user, and the contents look up operation on a channel, It is the software storage characterized by providing the contents presentation step which answers the user operation through the aforementioned user operation step, and takes out and presents record contents from the selected virtual channel.

[0031] The software storage concerning the 2nd side of this invention is a medium which offers computer software in a computer-readable form to the general purpose computer system which can perform various program codes, for example. Attachment and detachment of CD (Compact Disc), FD (Floppy Disc), MO (Magneto-Optical disc), etc., etc. are free for such a medium, and it is a storage of portability. Or it is also technically possible to provide specific computer system with computer software via transmission media, such as a network (for a network not to ask distinction of radio and a cable), etc.

[0032] Such a software storage defines the collaboration-relation on the structure of the computer software and the storage for realizing the function of computer software predetermined in a computer system top, or a function. If it puts in another way, as a result of demonstrating a collaboration-operation on computer system by installing predetermined computer software in computer system through the software storage concerning the 2nd side of this invention, the same operation effect as contents reference / presentation system or the method concerning the 1st side of this invention can be acquired.

[0033]

[Function] In reference / presentation system and the method of videotape-recording contents concerning this invention, while classifying each record contents, a virtual channel is assigned to each classification. Moreover, on each virtual channel, contents are arranged on the actual or imagination time-axis. Therefore, each record contents can be assigned on a two-dimensional flat surface by setting up a virtual channel in the direction of a vertical axis, and setting up a time-axis in the direction of a horizontal axis. In other words, arbitrary record contents can be specified by carrying out the address of the position in the 2-way of the upper and lower sides and right and left. Moreover, contents can be easily chosen from each classifications by the operation which got used and was familiar in a TV receiving set called channel selection by assigning the upper and lower sides and cursor advance operation of each direction on either side to movement of the direction of a time-axis on channel selection and a channel, respectively.

[0034] Furthermore, the contents contained in each classification can be treated as a program broadcast on a virtual channel, and the programming means by automatic or the manual can be offered. In such a case, the program reproduction sequence of resulting [from the past of a virtual channel] with future can be specified, and each contents belonging to isomerisms can be mapped on a time-axis. Therefore, the contents under present reproduction are halted, or the head of the contents before and behind it can be pulled out, and reproduction can be made to start by move operation of the direction of a time-axis in each virtual channel. This is similar to patrolling the program broadcast the past, present, and a with future one along with the broadcast schedule which a certain office fixed, making the TV program table seen at the newspaper rear face assume in a user's head. Such contents search work is easily understood by the conventional TV user, and it is considered that it can master an operation format easily.

[0035] For example, operation of each direction of the upper and lower sides and right and left in the key of the shape of a cross which appears here and there also in the conventional remote control, a video-recovery machine, etc. can be assigned to channel selection and time-axis movement. In such a case, a user can perform easily and quickly channel selection and contents selection on a virtual channel, without removing a visual axis from TV screen, setting a finger in the center of abbreviation of a cross-joint key. The contents selection operation using the cross-joint key can be compared when choosing from a contents chart, and operation can perform it simply quickly.

[0036] Programming, such as the order of reproduction of the contents in each classification, i.e., a virtual channel, is automatically generable based on data, such as a user's taste and a user profile. For example, priority is given to contents with high a user's degree of interest and significance, and the order of contents reproduction can be determined or contents important for the time zone when possibility that a user will view and listen like golden time is high can be assigned. Consequently, even if it views and listens to the videotape-recording contents taken out according to this example as it is, contents presentation from which it does not separate from expectation of a user can be performed.

[0037] this invention can do the operation effect so more suitably, when reproducing easily the contents of a large number which tend to be ****(ed) without being rather reproduced only by recording rather than it discovers a certain specific contents out of a huge recording device. According to reference / presentation system and the method of contents concerning this invention, the pleasure which was not in a conventional television set, conventional VTR, etc. can be given to a user, such as discovering contents interesting by chance.

[0038] For example, imagination programming on a virtual channel can be made by specifying the group of the metadata which an application program treats, and multimedia data as one of the imagination programs, and deciding the execution sequence of each multimedia data. In such a case, selection of metadata or multimedia data is possible by operation equivalent to the program selection on the virtual channel which consists of two or more image contents located in a line on a time-axis which was mentioned above. A user does not newly need to master the operating procedure which chooses metadata (execution) to reproduce using the application program under execution, and multimedia data. Moreover, even if it is the televiwer who does not have full knowledge of concepts on a computer, i.e., information processing technology, such as an application program, and metadata and multimedia data, the service which these contents reference / presentation system offers is enjoyable as it is.

[0039] Since the imagination program constituted with application, metadata, or multimedia data is performed interactively, generally the reproduction time is unfixed. Therefore, as imagination programming, the execution time does not become settled but only the order of execution is determined. In such a case, when it is in the middle of execution, it changes to another channel and it has returned to the same channel after fixed time (or unfixed time) progress, a televiwer can receive the contents which can perform change operation of a channel without sense of incongruity, and are shown by change operation by contents reproduction being made to be resumed from - state and a place at the time just before changing a channel last time.

[0040] The purpose, the feature, and advantage of further others of this invention will become [rather than] clear by detailed explanation based on the example and the drawing to append of this invention mentioned later.

[0041]

[Embodiments of the Invention] Hereafter, the example of this invention is explained in detail, referring to a drawing.

[0042] The hardware composition of the contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 with which operation of this invention is presented is typically shown in drawing 1.

[0043] The contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 concerning this example offer videotape-recording service of the program (broadcast contents) broadcast every moment from each broadcasting station, and also can perform reference and presentation services of much videotape-recording contents to a user. Contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10 can be mounted as one of the AV equipments, for example, can consist of the television receivers and one like a set top box (STB).

[0044] Within contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10, CPU (Central Processing Unit)11 as a main controller interconnects with each hardware component through a bus 50, and performs generalization-control to each component. Hereafter, each part of contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10 is explained.

[0045] The broadcast wave received with the antenna (not shown) is supplied to a tuner 51. The broadcast wave follows the regular format, for example, may include program guide information (EPG:Electric Program Guide) etc. Especially a broadcast wave does not ask distinction of a ground wave, a satellite wave, a cable, and radio.

[0046] According to the directions from CPU11, a tuner 51 performs, tuning, i.e., a channel selection, of the broadcast wave of a predetermined channel, and outputs received data to the consecutive demodulator 52. In a demodulator 52, it restores to the received data by which the digital modulation is carried out. In addition, the broadcast wave transmitted can respond to an analog or digital one, and can change or extend the composition of a tuner 11 suitably.

[0047] For example, in the case of digital satellite broadcasting, the digital data received and recovered from the broadcast wave is a "transport stream" which AV data by which MPEG 2 (Moving Picture Experts Group 2) compression was carried out, and the data for data broadcasting are multiplexed, and is constituted. The former AV data are the image and speech information which constitute a broadcast contents main part. Moreover, the latter data for data broadcasting are data which accompany this program main part, for example, contain EPG (Electric Program Guide : electronic program guide). In addition, a transport stream follows a convention of the "transport layer" said by the OSI (Open Systems Interconnection) reference model.

[0048] A decoder 53 interprets this transport stream and divides it into AV data and the data for data broadcasting by which MPEG 2 compression was carried out. Furthermore, real-time AV data compressed by the MPEG 2 method are divided into compression image data and compression voice data. And after carrying out MPEG 2 extension processing to image data, reproducing the original video signal and carrying out PCM (Pulse Code Modulation) decoding to voice data, it compounds with addition sound and considers as a reproduction sound signal. The decoder 53 may equip the self local with the memory 54 for work data storage. The display output of the reproduction video signal is carried out to a display 61 through a composer 57, and the voice output of the reproduction sound signal is carried out to a loudspeaker 62 through a mixer 55.

[0049] A decoder 53 transmits the data for data broadcasting separated from the transport stream to CPU11 by bus 50 course. In CPU11, with predetermined application, the data for data broadcasting can be processed and it can use for creation of an EPG screen etc.

[0050] Moreover, a decoder 53 can transmit the MPEG 2 stream before extension processing to CPU11 or other devices (for example, HDD17 etc.) by bus 50 course by the demand from CPU11.

[0051] The user interface control section 56 is a module which processes the alter operation from a user, for example, is equipped with the operation button / switch for a user doing direct manual operation (not shown), and the function which receives the remote operation from the remote control 60 through infrared radiation (IR) etc. Moreover, the display panel and LED indicator (not shown) for displaying the present content of a setting may be included.

[0052] CPU (Central Processing Unit)11 is a main controller which generalizes operation of the contents videotape recording and regeneration system 10 whole, and can perform various kinds of applications in the plat-form top offered by the operating system (OS).

[0053] RAM (Random Access Memory)12 is volatile memory which is used in order to load the executive-program code of CPU11 or to write in the work data of an executive program and which can be written in. Moreover, ROM (Read Only Memory)13 is memory only for read-out which stores everlasting the self-test and initializer performed to the power up of contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10, the control code for hardware operation, etc.

[0054] The IEEE1394 interface 15 is a serial high-speed interface in which data transmission and reception of about several 10 MBpses are possible. The external instrument of IEEE1394 correspondence is [tree] connectable or connectable in an IEEE1394 port. As an IEEE1394 correspondence device, a video camera 64, a scanner (not shown), etc. are mentioned, for example.

[0055] Hard disk equipment (HDD) 17 is the random and accessible external storage which can accumulate a program, data, etc. by the file format of a predetermined format, for example, has about (or 100GB or more) dozens of GB of large capacity. HDD17 is connected to the bus 50 through the hard disk interface 18. Although especially mass external storage when realizing this invention is not limited to hard disk equipment, it is more desirable for high-speed random access to be possible.

[0056] CPU11 answers the user command through remote control 60 or the U/I control section 56, and publishes videotape-recording directions and its reproduction directions of contents (or it may not be concerned with the existence of an explicit user command, but videotape-recording operation may always be performed).

[0057] At the time of videotape-recording operation, the MPEG 2 stream before extension processing is transmitted to HDD17 from a decoder 53. Especially as for a data transfer method, the PIO (program IO) transmittal mode, the DMA (Direct Memory Access) transmittal mode, etc. are not limited. On HDD17, each broadcast contents recorded on videotape are accumulated according to time series (following for example, in order of a reproduction start) for every virtual channel. However, about the accumulation method of contents, it explains in detail behind.

[0058] Moreover, when reproducing videotape-recording contents, the MPEG 2 stream taken out from HDD17 is transmitted to a decoder 53 by bus 50 course. In a decoder 53, like the time of reception, it separates into compression image data and compression voice data, and MPEG 2 extension processing is carried out, and it restores to an original image and original voice data, and regenerates.

[0059] The graphic operation controller 18 is an exclusive controller which generates a computer screen according to the drawing instruction which CPU11 publishes, for example, has drawing capacity equivalent to SVGA (Super Video Graphic Array) or XGA (eXtended Graphic Array). The graphic operation controller 18 can carry out drawing processing of for example, a GUI operation screen or the EPG screen.

[0060] When piling up and processing the reproduction image restored by the decoder 54 by carrying out MPEG 2 extension processing, and the computer picture generated by the graphic operation controller 18, synthetic processing of two or more screens is performed by the composer 57.

[0061] As mentioned above, the received plentiful broadcast contents are accumulated at hard disk equipment 17. The contents record map on hard disk equipment 17 is typically shown in drawing 2.

[0062] On the record map, each record contents are arranged on the time-axis actual [record contents] or imagination for every virtual channel while they are classified into a virtual channel. In the example shown in drawing 2, a channel is assigned to a vertical axis, the time-axis is assigned to the horizontal axis, respectively, and it has appearance as shown in a kind of program schedule.

[0063] The virtual channel virtually assigned on contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 in addition to the broadcast channel managed by the actual broadcasting station can be included in a channel. In the example shown in drawing 2, although the NHK office of the lower shell of the 1st line and the ABC office of the 2nd line are actual broadcast channels, X after the lower shell of the 3rd line, Y games, and Z game — presuppose that it is the virtual channel virtually set up on contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 (programming).

[0064] The column of an actual broadcast channel can be edited using the data extracted from EPG in data broadcasting.

[0065] The classification of contents is assigned to each virtual channel and each contents are recorded on videotape on the corresponding virtual channel (or the contents recorded on videotape are arranged). The classification method of contents may be the classification method based on the default classification method, a user's taste, other profile information, etc.

[0066] On each channel, each corresponding contents are arranged according to time series (following for example, in order of a reproduction start). As for the time-axis in an actual broadcast channel, it is desirable that it is in agreement with an actual time-axis when preventing a user's misapprehension and operation mistake. On the other hand, on a virtual channel, there may not necessarily be need of using an actual time-axis, and may be an imagination time-axis.

[0067] For example, on each virtual channel, sorting of the record contents can be carried out according to significance or a user's degree of interest (every [namely,] classification), or programming operation of concentrating and arranging contents with high significance and degree of interest at golden time (time zone when possibility that a user will view and listen is high) can be applied. As a result of performing such programming processing, the time-axis on a virtual channel becomes the imagination thing which is not in agreement with actual televising time. About the generation method of a virtual channel, it explains in detail behind.

[0068] On the contents record map equipped with composition as shown in a program schedule as shown in drawing 2, since each record contents are assigned on the two-dimensional flat surface, arbitrary record contents can be specified by carrying out the address of the position in the 2-way of the upper and lower sides and right and left.

[0069] On such a contents record map, a user can choose contents easily from each classifications by the operation which got used and was familiar in a TV receiving set called channel selection by assigning the upper and lower sides and cursor advance operation of each direction on either side to movement of channel selection and the direction of a time-axis.

[0070] However, contents record map composition as shown in drawing 2 is logical record structure, and does not need to be in agreement with the physical record structure on a hard disk. On a hard disk, file management is performed by file systems, such as FAT (File Allocation Table)32, for example.

[0071] The example of composition of the user control panel of the remote control 60 applied to this example or the U/I control section 55 is shown in drawing 3.

[0072] As shown in this drawing, on the control panel, the numerical-keypad group assigned to channel selection operation of each channel and the cursor key group assigned in each direction of the upper and lower sides and right and left are arranged.

[0073] The channel currently assigned to several character each key may be a virtual channel (above-mentioned) which consists of contents accumulated at hard disk equipment 17 in addition to the broadcast channel broadcast from an actual broadcasting station. Therefore, a user can direct viewing and listening of a virtual channel, i.e., the contents reproduction from hard disk equipment 17, by operation equivalent to the usual channel selection.

[0074] It is desirable to assign the numerical keypad which is not used for the actual broadcast channel to virtual channels. In the example shown in drawing 3, a total of 15 numerical keypads of 1-15 are prepared. Moreover, in the example shown in drawing 2, the channel number 4 is assigned to the ABC office for the channel number 1 to the NHK office which is an actual broadcasting station, respectively. Moreover, to each of the virtual channels X, Y, and Z generated by contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10, 13, 14, and 15 which are the unassigned channel number which the real channel is not using are assigned.

[0075] A cursor key group carries out the home position in the center of abbreviation, and the upper part navigation key, the

lower part navigation key, the left navigation key, and the method navigation key of the right are arranged in each place of the upper and lower sides and right and left. therefore, by putting a fingertip on the home position, even if a user does not view especially a control panel, and it does not remove an eye line from TV screen namely, he can discover the cursor key of the request direction by the fingertip, and can perform a key stroke

[0076] By generally operating the vertical (+/-) key arranged on remote control or the set top box, a decrement can be incremented or carried out and every one channel number can be tuned in. For example, in contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10, in the state where the channel number 12 has tuned in, whenever it carries out the depression of the upper part move (+) key once, the channel changes one by one to the channel number 13 (namely, virtual channel X), the channel number 14 (namely, virtual channel Y), and the channel number 15 (namely, virtual channel Z). If the depression of the upper part navigation key is carried out further once again, it can return to the channel number 1.

[0077] Here, the channel selection operation and rapid-traverse/rewinding operation through the control panel shown in drawing 3 as shown in drawing 2, in case programming is carried out on hard disk equipment 17 are considered.

[0078] When the present time is 8:15, the program N3 is broadcast at the actual broadcasting station NHK, and A3 is broadcast in the ABC office, respectively.

[0079] While tuning in the NHK office, when it continues pushing an upper part navigation key in this time, it is N3(1ch) -> --->A3(4ch) -> --- Reception of each program or reproduction from a hard disk is performed in the order ->X3 (13ch) ->Y3 (14ch) ->Z2 (15ch) ->N3 (1ch) ->---

[0080] Of course, it is not necessary to choose a channel as a channel numerical order serially using an upper part navigation key or a lower part navigation key, and can change directly by carrying out the depression of the numerical keypad between discontinuous channel numbers or between a real channel and a virtual channel. For example, if the depression of the numerical keypad 13 is carried out to the period which has tuned in the real channel 1 under broadcasting, it will transit directly to virtual channel X, and reproduction operation of a program X3 will begin.

[0081] In addition, when there are only 12 numerical keypads of 1-not 15 but 1-12, or even if it is the case where it has 16 or more pieces, it is the same as that of **** that it can transit directly to the real channel or virtual channel which corresponds by to carry out channel selection operation by operation of a vertical (+/-) key at a channel numerical order, that it can do [what a virtual channel should be assigned for to an unassigned channel number with an intact real channel], and depression operation

[0082] Moreover, even if you are the case where a general ten key is used in a computing system which has only ten numerical keypads and determination (Enter) keys to 0-9, please understand that specification operation of a channel number can be performed similarly.

[0083] When the present time is 8:15, while having tuned in the NHK office (1ch) and ABC office (4ch) which are a real channel, in the example shown in drawing 2, a user cannot but view and listen to the broadcast contents received every moment passively. On the other hand, since it is recorded on random and accessible equipment like hard disk equipment 17, the program, i.e., the contents, of virtual channels X and Y or Z, they can be regenerated at arbitrary speed from arbitrary record places. Therefore, in a virtual channel, various viewing-and-listening gestalten, such as "a rapid traverse", "rewinding", "slow reproduction", and "a scene jump", are permitted.

[0084] When using a control panel with the cursor key of each direction of the upper and lower sides as shown in drawing 3, and right and left, cursor advance operation of a longitudinal direction can be assigned to a time-axis. For example, it can assign movement in the program immediately after the ability setting the method navigation key of the right at a virtual channel to movement in the program of a just before [in / a virtual channel / for a left navigation key], respectively.

[0085] For example, although a program Y3 is reproduced in the state where virtual channel Y (14ch) is tuned in when the present time is 8:15, if a front jump is carried out and the depression of the method navigation key of the right is carried out to the start point of the following program Y4 further once again by carrying out the depression of the method navigation key of the right once further, a front jump can be carried out at the start point of the following program Y5. On the contrary, if it can return to the start point of a program Y3 and the depression of the left navigation key is continuously carried out once by carrying out the depression of the left navigation key once in the state where the program Y3 is reproduced, a back jump can be carried out to the start point of the program Y2 in front of it.

[0086] Although the place which skips contents, such as a rapid traverse, rewinding, etc. in a virtual channel, in the above explanation was assigned, the beginning, i.e., the start point, of each program, the summary of this invention is not necessarily limited to this. For example, the inside of one program may be divided still more finely per scene etc., and the navigation key of each right and left may be assigned to scene movement within a program.

[0087] On a control panel, you may arrange other keys and buttons besides these numerical-keypads group or a cursor key group. For example, you may prepare directions buttons, such as a halt, rewinding, a rapid traverse, and slow reproduction.

[0088] Other examples of composition of the user control panel of remote control 60 (or U/I control section 55) are shown in drawing 4.

[0089] In the control panel shown in this drawing, since the composition and the function of a numerical keypad are equivalent to the case where it is shown in drawing 3, explanation is omitted here.

[0090] In this control panel, as for the cursor key group, two kinds of navigation keys are arranged in right-and-left each direction. The navigation key located outside to the home position can be assigned to a big jump, for example, movement in a program (contents) unit. Moreover, the navigation key located inside to the home position can be assigned to movement in a unit smaller than scene movement within a program etc.

[0091] Or a navigation key is pushed merit (that is, the depression state of a key is continued more than a predetermined time), and you may make it make it jump greatly by things with the composition of the cursor key group same as the alternative as the case where it is shown in drawing 3. It is not necessary to increase the number of keys on a control panel, and, according to this alternative, equipment cost can be saved.

[0092] In addition, the boundary of the scene within a program can also be detected and set up by the manual, and it can also apply and detect technology, such as an image processing, automatically. Or you may make it a contents providers side, such as a broadcasting station, distribute the data (for example, metadata) which described the scene boundary position etc. the charge or for nothing through data broadcasting, the Internet, etc. However, since the boundary detection of a scene itself is not directly connected with the summary of this invention, in this specification, it does not explain any more.

[0093] Processing of a rapid-traverse, rewinding, slow reproduction, and scene jump etc. is applicable to a virtual channel with the random access to hard disk equipment 17. However, as a result of performing such processing, it will separate from the finish time of the program on the corresponding virtual channel from the finish time as a program schedule (contents record map) as



shown in drawing 2. In such a case, it is desirable to carry out the re-schedule of the programming on a virtual channel dynamically. For example, what is necessary is to advance the start and finish time of all programs which follow only for 30 minutes, when viewing and listening of a program is completed early temporarily only for 30 minutes. However, when reproduction of the program concerned is again started by depression operation of a left navigation key etc., according to the viewing-and-listening finish time of the time, the third-time schedule of the consecutive program will be carried out.

[0094] Then, the programming method is explained.

[0095] Programming processing is realized when CPU11 performs predetermined application for example, in contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10. Although some technique can be considered to the programming method, the method of matching a virtual channel with the classification of a program can be mentioned, for example.

[0096] For example, in data broadcasting, each virtual channel which has titles, such as a "sport channel", a "news channel", and a "variety channel", based on the genre information included in the data distributed as EPG can be set up. Moreover, recommended information, a name of a person (cast), etc. can generate a virtual channel automatically by applying a predetermined rule based on various information on others which are added to EPG also besides using genre information.

[0097] Or a user can bundle the program which carried out videotape-recording reservation clearly, and can set up one virtual channel. However, the user who uses a videotape-recording device does not restrict that it is single, but using in common among two or more users is also assumed. In such a case, you may set up a virtual channel for every user on same contents videotape recording and regeneration system 10. Moreover, it is made to carry out user specification whether a single user should store in which virtual channel for every program by owning two or more virtual channels for videotape recording.

[0098] Moreover, when personal information, such as a user's taste and a profile, is inputted into the system 10, or when there is information extracted from the viewing-and-listening inclination under the fixed rule when the past viewing-and-listening inclination was accumulated, the program which can be recommended to a user based on this kind of information can be specified. And the virtual channel which collected recommendation programs can newly be set up.

[0099] Moreover, when a virtual channel is generated, it is necessary to decide the order of reproduction of the contents within a virtual program further.

[0100] The order of televising, the order of recommendation which suits a user's taste, the order in alignment with the fixed classification shaft, etc. can carry out sorting of the contents, i.e., recorded program, included in one virtual channel according to a predetermined rule. In this case, you may use the viewing-and-listening history of a user's past.

[0101] You may make it arrange the low contents of significance as the order of recommendation etc. places contents with the highest significance at the present time to which it is viewing and listening and separates from the present time especially, in using the importance for a televiwer for the criteria of sorting. Moreover, the program arranged before the present time (namely, past) may arrange the low contents of significance further. According to such programming, by traversing in the about 1 direction toward the future on the time-axis of a virtual channel, possibility of discovering a program watching becomes high and a user's convenience of the contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 concerning this example improves further.

[0102] Moreover, the contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 concerning this invention are applicable also to record and regeneration of not record of a program but multimedia contents other than broadcast. For example, Application z can be assigned to one virtual channel Z on the program schedule (contents record map) shown in drawing 2.

[0103] The application z said here is good at the digester which generates the digest of the program recorded on videotape, for example, the e-commerce application which offers electronic commerce service.

[0104] When the application z assigned to the virtual channel is a digester, each programs Z1 and Z2 on the virtual channel concerned and Z3 -- can constitute the program by which digest processing was carried out by the metadata used for the program contents (or multimedia data) and the digest of the origin set as the object of a digest. Metadata is "data about data" and the attribute of data, a semantic content, an acquisition place, a storing place, etc. can describe the information (for example, which portion in a program or multimedia data is the most important?) which manages data. Metadata can be used for assistance of access (reference) to data, and various uses for media data viewing and listening.

[0105] Moreover, when the application z assigned to the virtual channel is e-commerce application, the still picture side of the waiting for an input is used abundantly in many cases. In this example, user operation equivalent to the change of TV channel is made to perform starting and a switch of application. Therefore, also in multimedia contents, such as e-commerce application, since a dynamic image can be shown like television televising at the time of the change, it is effective. For example, when an e-commerce channel starts, or when it is switched to the channel concerned from other channels (a real channel and a virtual channel are included), the image contents, such as commercial video, can be first indicated by reproduction.

[0106] When it is not reproduction of record contents, such as a program, but the virtual channel to which application was assigned, the combination of multimedia data and metadata is equivalent to one program in other channels.

[0107] That to which it can view and listen by the virtual channel of digester application is a digest dynamically reproduced from original program video data and original metadata. for example, a user -- the reproduction time of a digest -- dialogic operation -- that is, it can change interactively Thus, under interactive viewing-and-listening environment, it is rare that program viewing and listening is completed as the time by which a schedule setup was carried out as programming, it is unnatural operation to force televising to terminate and it lacks in usability just because it reached during viewing and listening at the finish time.

[0108] Then, in this example, the time decided and mapped only in the starting sequence of the multimedia data with which programming on the virtual channel to which application was assigned is used, and metadata is limited to an expedient meaning.

[0109] Although each program seems to go on to the passage of time faithfully when programming of a virtual channel is visualized (for example, when a screen display of the contents record map as shown in drawing 2 is carried out as a program schedule), the program on a virtual channel changes in the following program, when a user ends viewing and listening of the program concerned. As mentioned above, it can switch to the following program or a former program by applying the right-and-left cursor key operation on a control panel.

[0110] Even if it is any of the virtual channel assigned to reproduction of record contents, or the virtual channel to which application was assigned, it once moves from the virtual channel concerned to other channels, and when it has returned, reproduction can be resumed by two kinds of methods shown below. Namely, [0111] (1) Resume reproduction from the point which advanced only the part in which the real time passed according to programming on a virtual channel.

[0112] (2) Resume from the point (namely, point which the program on a virtual channel interrupted) which moved to other channels.

[0113] Contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 set up the method (1) as a default, and you may make it switch it to a method (2) according to directions from a user, such as operation on a control panel. Or a "resume" button (not

shown) is arranged on control panels, such as remote control 60, and when the button concerned is pushed, you may make it resume from the point which the program on a virtual channel interrupted.

[0114] Moreover, you may be made to carry out a screen display of the mark and tag in which a reproduction start place is shown on the time-axis on each virtual channel.

[0115] The structure of the virtual channel managed table for managing the record contents broadcast namely, reproduced on each virtual channel is typically shown in the following [Table 1].

[0116]

[Table 1]

仮想チャンネル番号 (VCNUM)	仮想チャンネル名 (VCNAME)	番組 ID (PID)	番組名 (PNAME)	開始時間 (PST)	再生時間 (PDUR)	ファイル ID (PFID)	チャンネルタイプ (CTYPE)
13	X	X 1	...	6:30	30:00	xfile#1	V
13	X	X 2	...	7:00	50:00	xfile#2	V
...
14	Y	Y 1	...	6:00	1:40:00	yfile#1	V
14	Y	Y 2	...	7:40	20:00	yfile#2	V
...
15	Q	Q 1	...	7:00	2:00:00	qfile#1	A
15	Q	Q 2	...	9:00	2:00:00	qfile#2	A
...

[0117] On a virtual channel managed table, one record is prepared for every program. Each record includes each field for writing in the start time (PST) of a virtual channel number (VCNUM), a virtual channel name (VCNAME), a program identifier (PID), a program name (PNAME), and a program and reproduction time (PDUR), the file identification child (PFID) of a file that stored program contents, and a channel type (CTYPE). Such a virtual channel managed table is generable based on EPG distributed by data broadcasting.

[0118] Preferably, on the virtual channel managed table, the record has aligned so that a channel number and a start time may rise and it may become order. for example, the program identifier (PID) which corresponds by searching this virtual channel managed table when the virtual channel number (VCNUM) which it is on the control panel of remote control 60 is chosen as arbitrary time and a program name (PNAME) — the record contents file (PFID) can be specified further If file designation can be carried out, using general file systems, such as FAT32, record contents can be taken out from hard disk equipment 17 at random, and it can reproduce.

[0119] Application shall be assigned to the virtual channel of the channel number 15 in the example shown in [Table 1].

[0120] Moreover, the structure of the program metadata table for managing the metadata used in each program broadcast namely, reproduced on a virtual channel is typically shown in the following [table 2].

[0121]

[Table 2]

番組 ID (PID)	ファイル ID (PFID)	シーン番号 (PSNUM)	始点タイムコード (PSTC)	終点タイムコード (PETC)	重要度	Description
...
...
...

[0122] Metadata can divide the inside of one program for every scene, and can describe the information (for example, a performer, the content, etc.) relevant to significance or the scene concerned. On a program metadata table, one record is prepared for every scene within a program. Each record includes each field for writing in a program identifier (PID), a file identification child (PFID), the scene number (PSNUM) within a program, the starting point time code (PSTC) of a scene and a terminal point time code, significance, and detailed information (Description).

[0123] The offer contractor (or related service provision contractor) of broadcast contents or application may make data broadcasting, the Internet, etc. a transmission medium, and may distribute metadata the charge or for nothing while he makes such metadata beforehand.

[0124] Moreover, the structure of the look-up table which described the correspondence relation of the application program and data for the virtual channel assigned to application is typically shown in the following [table 3].

[0125]

[Table 3]

番組 ID (PID)	ファイル ID (PFID)	アリケーション・プログラム ファイル ID (APFID)	データ・ファイル ID (DFID)	データ・ファイル ID (DFID)	データ・ファイル ID (DFID)
Q 1	qfile1	A Q	D Q 1 ₁	—	—
Q 2	qfile2	A Q	D Q 2 ₁	D Q 2 ₂	D Q 2 ₃
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

[0126] In this look-up table, one record is prepared for every program of the virtual channel to which application is assigned. Each programs Q1 and Q2 reproduced on the virtual channel of the channel number 15 in the example shown in [Table 3] — The record is prepared. Each field for each record writing in a program identifier (PID), a file identification child (PFID), the file identification child (APID) of the application program to be used, and the file identification child (DFID) of the data file (multimedia data) used within a program is prepared. On one program, since two or more data files can be used, you may prepare the DFID field two or more.

[0127] In drawing 5, the fundamental procedure performed in the contents videotape recording and the regeneration system 10 concerning this example is illustrated in the form of a flow chart. After contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10 starting this procedure and performing predetermined initialization processing, it performs continuously during a power-on period. In this procedure, in order to keep each of the channel number under present selection, the maximum channel value which can be specified, and the minimum channel value, suppose that Variables CC, MAXC, and MINC are used. Hereafter, it explains according to this flow chart.

[0128] After contents videotape recording and a regeneration system 10 starting and performing predetermined initialization processing (Step S1), the present channel value is taken out from CC (Step S2), and channel change processing is performed (Step S3). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of channel change processing is separately shown in drawing 6.

[0129] Subsequently, the key which the user pushed on control panels, such as remote control 60, is acquired (step S4).

[0130] When an upper part navigation key is pushed, it judges [(Step S5) and] whether only 1 incremented the present channel value CC first (Step S18), and CC reached the maximum channel value MAXC (Step S19). When CC reaches MAXC, CC is returned to the minimum channel value MINC (Step S20).

[0131] Moreover, when a lower part navigation key is pushed, it judges [(Step S6) and] whether only 1 carried out the decrement of the present channel value CC first (Step S21), and CC reached the minimum channel value MINC (Step S22). When CC reaches MINC, CC is returned to the maximum channel value MAXC (Step S23).

[0132] Moreover, when a numerical keypad is pushed, the number value of (Step S7) and this numerical keypad is substituted for the present channel value CC (Step S24).

[0133] After renewal of the present channel value CC finishes, it returns to Step S3 and channel change processing is performed.

[0134] Moreover, when the method navigation key of the right is pushed, processing at the time of (Step S8) and a right key input is performed (Step S25). Similarly, when a left navigation key is pushed, processing at the time of (Step S9) and a left key input is performed (Step S26). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of processing is separately shown in drawing 10 and drawing 11 at the time of right-and-left each key input.

[0135] Moreover, when the pushed key is power supply OFF, (Step S11) and the power supply of a system 10 are intercepted, and this whole manipulation routine is ended.

[0136] Moreover, when depression operation of the keys other than the above is carried out, the function currently assigned to the key is called and other predetermined processings are performed (Step S12). however, since the processing performed in this case is not related the summary of this invention, and directly, suit by this detailed letter — it does not *****

[0137] Subsequently, it distinguishes whether the completion signal of reproduction (after-mentioned) was published from file reconstructive processing (Step S13). It stands by until it returns to step S4 and the next key stroke is performed, if the completion signal of reproduction is not published.

[0138] On the other hand, when the program on a virtual channel greets an end when the completion signal of reproduction is published namely, re-schedule processing of a virtual channel is performed (Step S14). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of re-schedule processing of a virtual channel is separately shown in drawing 12.

[0139] Subsequently, the identifier (PID) of the program by which the schedule is carried out to the degree of the program under reproduction on the present channel is acquired from a virtual channel managed table (refer to Table 2) (Step S15). And regeneration of the program file (PFID) applicable to PID of the following program is performed (Step S16). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of regeneration of a program file is separately shown in drawing 8.

[0140] In the form of the flow chart shows the detailed procedure of the channel change processing performed in drawing 6 in Step S3 among the primitive operation routines shown in drawing 5. Channel change processing progresses to selection of a real channel, or selection processing of a virtual channel, after performing end processing of the reproduction, when are called and the virtual channel is being reproduced. Hereafter, it explains according to the flow chart shown in drawing 6.

[0141] First, it distinguishes whether Flag PF is set during reproduction (Step S31).

[0142] If Flag PF is set during reproduction, subsequently the channel type of the program under broadcasting or the program currently reproduced will be checked on the present channel (Step S32). This processing is performed by searching the record of the corresponding program identifier (PID) with a virtual channel managed table (referring to Table 1), and referring to the channel type.

[0143] If a channel type is "A", the window of the application concerned is made non-display (Step S33), and the application process priority concerned will be lowered, it will consider as the background (a background signal is published) (Step S34), and Flag PF will be canceled during reproduction (Step S35).

[0144] Moreover, if a channel type is "V", the reconstructive-processing terminate signal of the program currently reproduced on the present channel will be published (Step S36), and re-schedule processing of a virtual channel will be performed (Step

S37). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of re-schedule processing of a virtual channel is separately shown in drawing 12.

[0145] When it is judged that PF is set in Step S31, after canceling PF at Step S35, or after ending re-schedule processing of a virtual channel in Step S37, it progresses to Step S38 and distinguishes whether it is the real channel which the channel chosen now is broadcasting.

[0146] While publishing channel change directions so that the present channel value CC may be tuned in to a tuner 51 when the real channel is chosen (Step S40), a bus 50 is set as the display state (namely, state where the broadcast contents under broadcasting can be transmitted) of a tuner output (Step S41), and this whole manipulation routine is ended.

[0147] On the other hand, the real channel is not chosen, namely, when the virtual channel is chosen, selection processing of a virtual channel is performed (Step S39), and this whole manipulation routine is ended.

[0148] In the form of the flow chart shows the detailed procedure of selection processing of a virtual channel to drawing 7. In selection processing of a virtual channel, in the program included in the virtual channel concerned, the recorded on videotape program file which should be reproduced at the present time is specified, and it progresses to the regeneration. Hereafter, it explains according to the flow chart shown in drawing 7.

[0149] First, the present time (CT) is acquired from a system clock (Step S51).

[0150] Subsequently, the file identification child (PFID) of the program which corresponds to the present time (CT) which fills a lower formula [a-one number] out of a virtual channel managed table (refer to Table 1) is searched (Step S52).

[0151]

[Equation 1] $VCNUM == CC$ and $PST <= CT & PST + PDUR$ [0152] Furthermore, as a result of searching a virtual channel managed table, it distinguishes whether the virtual channel number VCNM applicable to the present channel value CC exists (Step S53).

[0153] When the corresponding virtual channel number exists, regeneration of the program file equivalent to the program file identification child PFID acquired by Step S52 is performed (Step S54). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of regeneration of a program file is separately shown in drawing 8.

[0154] On the other hand, when the corresponding virtual channel number does not exist, a non-signal screen is displayed with the selected channel number CC (Step S55). This has the metaphor of the display screen when choosing the channel to which the broadcasting station under broadcasting is not assigned in the usual television receiver.

[0155] In the form of the flow chart shows Step S16 and the detailed procedure of the program file regeneration performed in Step S54 among the virtual channel selection manipulation routines shown in drawing 7 to drawing 8 among the primitive operation routines shown in drawing 5. In program file regeneration, after specifying a reproduction start point and an ending point and setting up a file reproduction path in a system 10 (that is, the external output of the data stream read from hard disk equipment 17 is carried out by decoder 53 course), file reconstructive processing is started. However, in this manipulation routine, the time code of the program identifier under present reproduction, the time code of the present reproduction point, the starting point, and a terminal point, and in order to carry out the reproduction start and to hold each of a time code, each variables CPID and CPTC, and STC, ETC and TTC are introduced.

[0156] Hereafter, it explains according to the flow chart shown in drawing 8.

[0157] First, the program identifier PID by which reproduction specification is carried out is set to Variable CPID (Step S61).

[0158] Subsequently, this channel type of a program by which reproduction specification is carried out is checked (Step S62). This distinction processing is performed by referring to the record which corresponds to CPID in a virtual channel managed table (thing of reference of Table 1).

[0159] If the channel type of the present channel is "A", a program part number group file will be regenerated (Step S68). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of regeneration of a program part number group file is separately shown in drawing 14.

[0160] On the other hand, if the channel type of the present channel is "V", the program file identification child PFID corresponding to CPID will be acquired first (Step S63). This acquisition processing is performed by referring to the record which corresponds to CPID in a virtual channel managed table (thing of reference of Table 1).

[0161] And the value which added offset (CT-PST) with the present time to the starting point time code (STC) of this file is set as a time code CPTC of the present reproduction point (Step S64). Moreover, this end-of-file point time code is set to Variable ETC (Step S65).

[0162] And file reconstructive processing is started by making the time code CPTC of the present reproduction point into the starting point (Step S66). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of file reconstructive processing is separately shown in drawing 9.

[0163] After file reconstructive-processing starting in the step S66 after completing regeneration of the program part number group file in Step S68, Flag PF is set during reproduction (Step S67), and this whole manipulation routine is ended.

[0164] In the form of the flow chart shows the detailed procedure of file reconstructive processing started in Step S66 among the program file regeneration routines shown in drawing 8 to drawing 9. File reconstructive processing is generated as a child process from the process side which issues reproduction directions. In file reconstructive processing, a data stream is read from the point with which the specified file was specified, and it passes on the reproduction path (above-mentioned) set up in the system 10. File reconstructive processing holds the time code under reproduction. Moreover, the signal of the reproduction repositioning demand from a parent process is answered, and a reproduction position is changed.

[0165] Hereafter, it explains according to the flow chart shown in drawing 9.

[0166] First, it is being begun to read a stream one by one from the specified pointer by which file designation was carried out, and transmits to a decoder 53 (Step S71). Moreover, the time code read from the stream is set to CPTC (Step S72).

[0167] Subsequently, size comparison of the time code ETC of the present reproduction pointer CPTC and a terminal point is carried out (Step S73).

[0168] When the direction of the present reproduction pointer CPTC is over ETC, the completion signal of reproduction is published to a parent process (Step S74). And while canceling Flag PF during reproduction, process end processing is performed (Step S75), and this whole manipulation routine is ended.

[0169] On the other hand, when the present reproduction pointer CPTC has not yet reached ETC, it is confirmed whether the terminate signal is published from the parent process (Step S76).

[0170] If the terminate signal is published from the parent process, while progressing to Step S75 and canceling Flag PF during reproduction, process end processing is performed, and this whole manipulation routine is ended.

[0171] Furthermore, it is confirmed whether the reproduction skip signal is published from the parent process (Step S77).

[0172] The same processing as **** is repeated until it returns to Step S71 and CPTC reaches ETC, if the reproduction skip signal is not published. Moreover, when the reproduction skip signal is published, after moving a reproduction pointer to the specified position TTC specified by the parent process (Step S78), it returns to Step S71.

[0173] In the form of the flow chart shows the procedure performed in drawing 10 and drawing 11 on control panels, such as remote control 60, when depression operation of the method navigation key of the right is carried out. This procedure is equivalent to Step S25 of the basic flow shown in drawing 5. When the depression time of the method (or left) navigation key of the right is short, it jumps to the next (or just before) scene starting position, and when depression time is long, it moves to the program by which the schedule was carried out next (or before) on the virtual channel concerned. Hereafter, it explains according to this flow chart.

[0174] First, it is confirmed whether Flag PF is set during reproduction (Step S81). When Flag PF is not set during reproduction, depression operation of the method navigation key of the right is disregarded, and ends this manipulation routine.

[0175] When Flag PF is set during reproduction, subsequently the channel type of the program currently broadcast or reproduced on the present channel is checked (Step S82). This processing is performed by searching the record of the corresponding program identifier (PID) with a virtual channel managed table (referring to Table 1), and referring to the channel type.

[0176] If a channel type is "V", subsequently the depression time of the method navigation key of the right will be measured (Step S83).

[0177] When the depression time of the method navigation key of the right is under a predetermined time, it is interpreted as it being skip operation to the next scene. In this case, first, a program metadata table (refer to Table 2) is searched, and the corresponding scene is specified (Step S84). The corresponding scene fills the following formulas.

[0178]

[Equation 2] $PID = CPID \text{ and } PSTC < CPTC \leq PETC$ [0179] Subsequently, the next scene (PSNUM+1) of the scene number PSNUM specified by Step S84 is acquired (Step S85), and — this — the starting point TC of the following scene is set to the reproduction start time code TTC (Step S86) And a reproduction skip signal is published to file reconstructive processing (refer to drawing 9) (Step S87).

[0180] On the other hand, when the depression time of the method navigation key of the right is more than a predetermined time, it is interpreted as it being skip operation to the next program on a virtual channel. In this case, the identifier PID of the program by which the schedule is carried out to the degree of the program identifier CPID under reproduction on the present channel is acquired first (Step S88). This processing is realized by searching a record with the next start time (PST) of the record which corresponds to CPID in a virtual channel managed table (refer to Table 1).

[0181] Subsequently, to file reconstructive processing (refer to drawing 9) while reproducing CPID, a reconstructive-processing terminate signal is published (Step S89), and ETC is substituted for CPTC (Step S90).

[0182] Subsequently, re-schedule processing of a virtual channel is performed (Step S90). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of re-schedule processing of a virtual channel is separately shown in drawing 12.

[0183] Subsequently, regeneration of a program file is performed to the following program PID acquired in Step S88 (Step S91). Regeneration of a program file is as having already explained, referring to drawing 8.

[0184] On the other hand, when judged with a channel type being "A" in Step S82, the window of the application concerned is made non-display (Step S92), and the application process priority concerned is lowered, it considers as the background (a background signal is published) (Step S93), and Flag PF is canceled during reproduction (Step S94).

[0185] Furthermore, application type virtual channel re-schedule processing is performed in this case (Step S95). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of re-schedule processing of an application type virtual channel is separately shown in drawing 13.

[0186] Subsequently, a virtual channel managed table (refer to Table 1) is searched, the identifier PID of the program by which the schedule is carried out to the degree of the present program CPID is acquired (Step S96), and regeneration of a program file is performed to this program PID (Step S97). Regeneration of a program file is as having already explained, referring to drawing 8.

[0187] In addition, the procedure performed when depression operation of the left navigation key is carried out is realizable like the processing flow shown in drawing 10 and drawing 11. However, operation which goes back a schedule in this case and searches for program contents is performed. Therefore, at Step S88, the program identifier PID by which the schedule is carried out before the program CPID under present reproduction shall be acquired, and the substitution processing between Step S89 and Step S90 turns into processing which sets the starting point time code STC to the point CPTC under present reproduction.

[0188] In the form of the flow chart shows the detailed procedure of virtual channel re-schedule processing to drawing 12. Virtual channel re-schedule processing is performed in Step S14, Step S37 of the channel change manipulation routines shown in drawing 6, and Step S90 of the manipulation routines at the time of the navigation key depression of the drawing 10 right and left among the primitive operation routines shown in drawing 5.

[0189] In virtual channel re-schedule processing, when an end and discontinuation of the program concerned are performed at the time which differs from the time by which the schedule was carried out as a finish time of the program under present reproduction by operation of each navigation key on either side, a halt, rewinding, a rapid traverse, slow reproduction, etc., and only fixed time (difference of real time and schedule time) shifts the schedule of all programs by which the schedule is carried out after it, re-scheduling of a virtual channel is performed.

[0190] Hereafter, it explains according to the flow chart shown in drawing 12.

[0191] First, the present time CT is acquired from a system clock (Step S101).

[0192] Subsequently, the difference DT of real time and schedule time is calculated about the program CPID under present reproduction, and the program PID in agreement (S102). Calculation of DT is performed according to the following formulas with reference to the record of a program with which it corresponds in a virtual channel managed table.

[0193]

[Equation 3]

$DT = [(CT - PST) - (CPTC - STC)]$

[0194] subsequently, the record of all the programs on the virtual channel same in a virtual channel managed table as the program in $VCNUM == CC$, i.e., the present reproduction, — searching — the start time PST of each program — difference — DT is added (Step S103) Consequently, the re-scheduling of a virtual channel is completed.

[0195] Moreover, in the form of the flow chart shows the procedure of virtual channel re-schedule processing in case the virtual

channel is assigned to application to drawing 13. Hereafter, it explains according to this flow chart.

[0196] First, the present time CT is acquired from a system clock (Step S111).

[0197] Subsequently, the difference DT of real time and schedule time is calculated about the program CPID under present reproduction, and the program PID in agreement (S112). Calculation of DT is performed according to the following formulas with reference to the record of a program with which it corresponds in a virtual channel managed table.

[0198]

[Equation 4] $DT = (CT - (PST + PDUR))$

[0199] subsequently, the record of all the programs on the virtual channel same in a virtual channel managed table as the program in VCNUM==CC, i.e., the present reproduction, -- searching -- the start time PST of each program -- difference -- DT is added (Step S113) Consequently, the re-scheduling of a virtual channel is completed.

[0200] In the form of the flow chart shows the detailed procedure of the program part number group regeneration performed in Step S68 of a program file regeneration routine shown in drawing 8 to drawing 14. In the manipulation routine concerned, the variables CPID and MAXPROCESS for holding the program identifier under present reproduction and each of the number of the maximum execution child processes are prepared. Hereafter, it explains according to this flow chart.

[0201] First, PID acquires the application program file identification child APFID in the record which is in agreement with CPID from an application program-data correspondence table (refer to Table 3) (Step S121).

[0202] Subsequently, the list of processes under present starting is acquired from an operating system (OS) (Step S122).

[0203] Subsequently, it is confirmed whether there are APFID acquired in Step S121 in the started process and a match (Step S123).

[0204] When a process in agreement is found, this process confirms further whether to be under [sleep] ***** (Step S124).

[0205] If it is among sleep, this process is returned to a starting state from sleep (Step S125), further, the data file identifier DFID corresponding to the PID concerned will be acquired from an application program-data correspondence table (refer to Table 3), and this process will be passed (Step S126). (PSWAP signal issue)

[0206] Subsequently, this process is switched to foreground, control of display / operation system is passed (Step S127 (issue of a foreground signal)), and it returns from this manipulation routine.

[0207] On the other hand, in Step S123, when APFID and a match are not found in a starting process, it progresses to Step S128, an application program-data correspondence table (refer to Table 3) is searched, and the group of APFID corresponding to the PID concerned and DFID is acquired.

[0208] And the process-killing schedule time PET concerned (=PST+PDUR) is computed by acquiring the start time PST and the reproduction time PDUR corresponding to the PID concerned from a virtual channel managed table (referring to Table 1) (Step S129).

[0209] Subsequently, it is confirmed whether the process of the child application under starting is over the number MAXPROCESS of the maximum execution child processes (Step S130). When it is over MAXPROCESS, the thing of a sleep state is forced in child application to terminate (Step S131). Forced termination of a process is realized by issue of a "kill" signal.

[0210] Subsequently, a child process is started with DFID and the end schedule time PET by making into a during-starting parameter the application program specified by APFID (Step S132). The explanation is yielded to the after-mentioned although the detailed procedure of starting processing of a process is separately shown in drawing 15.

[0211] Then, this process is switched to foreground, control of display / operation system is passed, and it returns from issue (Step S127) of a foreground signal and this manipulation routine.

[0212] In the form of the flow chart shows the detailed procedure of the application process performed in Step S132 of a program part number group regeneration routine shown in drawing 14 to drawing 15. Hereafter, it explains according to this flow chart.

[0213] First, during-starting processing of a process of reading of the file specified by DFID etc. is performed (Step S141).

[0214] Subsequently, original processing of the application specified by APFID is performed (Step S12). Input process etc. is included in this processing.

[0215] Subsequently, the application process concerned confirms in the background whether it is working (Step S143).

[0216] When not operating in the background, it is confirmed further whether the background signal was received (Step S144). When a background signal is received, preservation processing of a state and data is performed (Step S145), and it switches to execution in the background (Step S145).

[0217] Moreover, in Step S143, when it is judged that it is operating in the background, it is confirmed further whether the present time CT is over the end schedule time PET (Step S151). When the present time CT is over the end schedule time PET, it changes in the sleep state (Step S154). Moreover, if it confirmed whether to have been the no which received the foreground signal (Step S152) and has received when the present time CT has not yet reached at the end schedule time PET, it will switch to execution by foreground (Step S153).

[0218] At Step S147, it is confirmed whether the PSWAP signal was published. When published, the identifier DFID of a new data file is acquired from a parent process (Step S148), and the file specified by this DFID is read (Step S149).

[0219] And in Step S150, it is confirmed whether kill which directs forced termination of a process was published (Step S150). When the kill signal is not published, it returns to Step S142, and processing mentioned above is repeated and performed to it. Moreover, when a kill signal is published, the whole application process is ended.

[0220] In addition, in this example, you may arrange the window for displaying the advance situation and schedule on a virtual channel on display 61 screen while displaying a virtual channel (or real channel).

[0221] The example of the display screen of a virtual channel window is shown in drawing 16. In the example of this drawing, the virtual channel window of timetable form has appeared in the lower left direction of a screen, and the reproduction starting position and reproduction time of each program can be checked. Moreover, on the virtual channel window, the indicator in which the present reproduction position is shown is displayed, and a televiwer can grasp intuitively and visually the schedule advance situation and the viewing-and-listening situation of self on a virtual channel.

[0222] It has explained in detail about this invention, referring to a specific example more than a [addendum]. however, the thing for which this contractor can accomplish correction and substitution of this example in the range which does not deviate from the summary of this invention -- obvious -- it is .

[0223] although this detailed in the letter one has explained taking the case of the device which records on videotape the broadcast contents broadcast from each broadcasting station -- the summary of this invention -- not necessarily -- this operative condition -- it is not limited like For example, this invention is applicable similarly to the system which records the

videotape recording of images other than broadcast contents, and contents other than an image. [0224] In short, with the gestalt of instantiation, this invention has been indicated and it should not be interpreted in limitation. In order to judge the summary of this invention, you should take into consideration the column of the claim indicated at the beginning.

[0225] [Effect of the Invention] As a full account was given above, according to this invention, outstanding reference / presentation system and the outstanding method of record contents which can take out the contents recorded on videotape and accumulated beforehand from storage to storage can be offered.

[0226] Moreover, according to this invention, a user can provide storage with outstanding reference / presentation system and the outstanding method of record contents which can discover contents with sufficient operability out of the contents of a large number recorded on videotape and accumulated.

[0227] Moreover, according to this invention, outstanding reference / presentation system and the outstanding method of record contents which can discover contents by operation equivalent to the channel selection in a common television set can be offered.

[0228] According to reference / presentation system and the method of record contents concerning this invention, image contents and other multimedia contents can be chosen by operation equivalent to selection of general TV channel. In order to choose the recorded contents, it becomes unnecessary therefore, for a user to master a new operation format. Moreover, the manufacturer of a contents videotape-recording machine does not need to develop the new mechanism for choosing the recorded contents, or does not need to mount, and does not need to add the new device or new parts which suited the new mechanism. That is, without device cost increasing, this invention can be realized and it can provide for a user.

[0229] In reference / presentation system and the method of record contents concerning this invention, while classifying each record contents, a virtual channel is assigned to each classification. Moreover, on each virtual channel, contents are arranged on the actual or imagination time-axis. Therefore, each record contents can be assigned on a two-dimensional flat surface by setting up a virtual channel in the direction of a vertical axis, and setting up a time-axis in the direction of a horizontal axis. In other words, arbitrary record contents can be specified by carrying out the address of the position in the 2-way of the upper and lower sides and right and left. Moreover, contents can be easily chosen from each classifications by the operation which got used and was familiar in a TV receiving set called channel selection by assigning the upper and lower sides and cursor advance operation of each direction on either side to movement of channel selection and the direction of a time-axis.

[0230] Furthermore, the contents contained in each classification can be treated as a program broadcast on a virtual channel, and the programming means by automatic or the manual can be offered. In such a case, the program reproduction sequence of resulting [from the past of a virtual channel] with future can be specified, and each contents of isomerisms can be mapped on a time-axis. Therefore, the contents under present reproduction are halted, or the head of the contents before and behind it can be pulled out, and reproduction can be made to start by move operation of the direction of a time-axis in each virtual channel. This is similar to patrolling the program broadcast the past, present, and a with future one along with the broadcast schedule which a certain office fixed, making the TV program table seen at the newspaper rear face assume in a user's head. Such contents search work is easily understood by the conventional TV user, and it is considered that it can master an operation format easily.

[0231] For example, operation of each direction of the upper and lower sides and right and left in the key of the shape of a cross which appears here and there also in the conventional remote control, a video-recovery machine, etc. can be assigned to channel selection and time-axis movement. In such a case, a user can perform easily and quickly channel selection and contents selection on a virtual channel, without removing a visual axis from TV screen, setting a finger in the center of abbreviation of a cross-joint key. The contents selection operation using the cross-joint key can be compared when choosing from a contents chart, and operation can perform it simply quickly.

[0232] Moreover, according to reference / presentation system and the method of contents concerning this invention, contents are only classified using a virtual channel, and a hierarchical classification is not performed by them. Therefore, it does not lapse into the situation where it does not know in which hierarchy of which classification that tends to take place in the case of a deep hierarchy desired contents exist.

[0233] Programming, such as the order of reproduction of the contents in each classification, i.e., a virtual channel, is automatically generable based on data, such as a user's taste and a user profile. For example, priority is given to contents with high a user's degree of interest and significance, and the order of contents reproduction can be determined or contents important for the time zone when an audience rating is high can be assigned like golden time. Consequently, even if it views and listens to the videotape-recording contents taken out according to this example as it is, contents presentation from which it does not separate from expectation of a user can be performed.

[0234] this invention can do the operation effect so more suitably, when reproducing easily the contents of a large number which tend to be ****(ed) without being rather reproduced only by recording rather than it discovers a certain specific contents out of a huge recording device. According to reference / presentation system and the method of contents concerning this invention, the pleasure which was not in a conventional television set, conventional VTR, etc. can be given to a user, such as discovering contents interesting by chance.

[0235] Furthermore, according to this invention, an application program can be chosen by operation equivalent to a switch of TV channel. Therefore, a user can deal with automatically the concept which is not in an application program, a conventional television set called the starting, or other AV equipments, without mastering a new operation format.

[0236] For example, imagination programming on a virtual channel can be made by specifying the group of the metadata which an application program treats, and multimedia data as one of the imagination programs, and deciding the execution sequence. in such a case, it mentioned above -- as -- being serial (for example, the order of a reproduction start) -- selection of metadata or multimedia data is possible by operation equivalent to the program selection on the virtual channel which consists of two or more arranged image contents A user does not newly need to master the operating procedure which chooses metadata (execution) to reproduce using the application program under execution, and multimedia data. Moreover, even if it is the televiwer who does not have full knowledge of concepts on a computer, i.e., information processing technology, such as an application program, and metadata and multimedia data, the service which these offer is enjoyable as it is.

[0237] Since the imagination program constituted with application, metadata, or multimedia data is performed interactively, generally the reproduction time is unfixed. Therefore, as imagination programming, the execution time does not become settled but only the order of execution is determined. In such a case, when it is in the middle of execution, a channel is changed and it

has returned to the same channel after fixed time progress, a televiewer can receive the contents which can perform change operation of a channel without sense of incongruity, and are shown by change operation by contents reproduction being made to be resumed from - state and a place at the time just before changing a channel last time.

[0238] At the time of - purchase, nothing is still recorded on the contents recording device at the time of shipment. If the static state of the waiting for an input is shown when a certain channel is chosen for the first time, different unnatural feeling from the case where channel change operation is performed in the usual television set etc. will be memorized. For the reason in such a case, at the time of first-time virtual channel selection, the natural feeling of a channel change can be given by showing dynamic contents using default data.

[0239] Moreover, by showing the information on the program arranged before and behind the program at the time of the program reproduction on a virtual channel, it can show so that it may turn out in which program it can next jump by the move operation on a time-axis (for example, operation of a right-and-left arrow key) at a glance, and it is a help to program selection.

[0240]

[Translation done.]

ア記憶媒体。
【請求項 3.8】さらに、1以上の放送局から放映中の放送組コンテンツを受信する受信ステップを備え、
前記チャネル割当ステップでは、受信可能な各放送局毎にチャネルを割り当て、
前記ユーザ操作ステップでは、実チャネルと仮想チャネルを区別しないチャネル選択操作を受容し、
前記コンテンツ提示ステップでは、前記ユーザ操作ステップを経て受容された実チャネルから取り出した現在放映中の放送組コンテンツ、又は、選択された仮想チャネルから取り出した組合コンテンツを提示する、ことを特徴とする請求項 3.5 に記載のソフトウェア記憶媒体。
【請求項 3.9】前記ユーザ操作ステップは、チャネル番号を指定する数字キー群を介したユーザ入力を含み、
前記チャネル割当ステップでは、各チャネルに対して該当する放送局に割り当てられたチャネル番号を割り当るとともに、実チャネルによって未使用のチャネル番号を仮想チャネルに割り当て、
前記コンテンツ提示ステップでは、前記ユーザ操作ステップを経て受信された各放送組コンテンツの組合コンテンツを示すための記憶コンテンツの選択及び表示方法に係る、特に、記憶装置に接続された多數の記録媒体、
前記コンテンツ提示ステップでは、記憶装置にあらかじめ録画・蓄積しておいたコンテンツを記憶媒体及び方法に示す記録コンテンツの録像提示システム及び方法に係り、特に、記憶装置に録画・蓄積された多數の記録媒体、
前記コンテンツ提示ステップでは、前記ユーザ操作ステップを経て受信された実チャネルからユーザ一人の選択するための記録コンテンツの選択方法に係る。
【請求項 4.0】更に詳しくは、本発明は、記憶装置に録画された多數の記録コンテンツの中からユーザが操作よくコンテンツを操作して選択するための記録コンテンツの選択システム及び方法に係る。
前記コンテンツ提示ステップでは、前記ユーザ操作ステップを経て受信された各放送組コンテンツの組合コンテンツを示すための記憶コンテンツの選択及び表示方法に係る、特に、一般的なテレビ受像機におけるチャネル選択と同等の操作でコンテンツを探し出すための記録コンテンツの検索、提示システムを採用する。

システム及び方法に関する

100031

ヨンを選択・起動して、さらに、アプリケーション・ワインディングウエ内データ・ファイルを選択することができ。あるいは、データ・ファイルと共にそれを起動可能なアプリケーションがあらからじめ登録されており、エクスプローラー画面上で所望のデータ・ファイルを選択することによって、対応するアプリケーションを起動してデータ・ファイルを開くことができる。いずれの場合も、いわゆるGUI (Graphical User Interface) 画面上で、あるいはマウスなどの適応指示装置、あるいはカーソル・キーによって所望のファイルやアプリケーションを選択することができる。

[0009] しかしながら、このような仮想機器システム上で定着しているGUI操作様式をデリバリーションや他のAV機器に導入しようとすると、アプリケーション選択のための新たな機器を追加することが必要となり、機器コストを高くすることになる。また、計算機システムを使用しないユーザは、全く新しいテレビジョン操作手段を見る必要が生じてしまい、むしろ操作性が低下しかねない。

[0010] コンテンツ選択は、テレビ受像機上におけるチャンネル選択に類似する操作とみることもできる。従来のテレビ受像機においては、チャンネル選択は、リモコン操作によって行なわれる。

セコムの上位バージョン、バーチャルアシスタントの操作による操作ができます。また、VTRなどにおけるF型端子(上送り)やREW(巻き戻し)、スキップ、フォワード(下送り)などの操作ができます。また、チャンネル選択は他の用端子キーが配設されています。音量操作は他の用端子毎に用端子キーを割り当てているので、機能によってキー数が増大する。いわゆる十進法によってキー数が増大する。しかし、リモコンにおいても、十字キーを使用するタイプのリモコンにおいても、十字キーを操作する場合は割り付けられていない。

【0012】本発明の更なる目的は、記憶装置に於ける記録コンテンツの検索・提示システム及び方法を提供することにある。

【0013】本発明の更なる目的は、一般的なテレビ受信機におけるチャンネル選択と同等の操作で記録コンテンツを探し出すことができる、そのための記録システム及び方法を提供することである。

【課題を解決するための手段】本発明は、上記課題を参考してなされたものであり、その第1の側面は、多數の

【0029】また、前記コンテンツ提示手段又はステップアは、各複数チャンネル上の各番組の再生開始時刻と再生時間及び又は再生位置を示すマークを画面上で提示するようにしてもよい(図16を参照のこと)。視聴者は、このような画面上にマークに従って、複数チャンネル上でスケジュール運行状況や自己の視聴状況を直感的且つ視覚的に把握することができる。

【0030】また、本発明の第2の側面は、多数のコンテンツを格納したランダム・アクセス可能な記憶装置から記憶コンテンツを効率的にユーザに提示するコンテンツ検索・提示処理をコンピュータ・システム上で実行するように記述されたコンピュータ・ソフトウェアをコンピュータ可読形式で物理的に格納したソフトウェア記憶媒体であって、前記コンピュータ・ソフトウェアは、前記記憶装置上の各記憶コンテンツを所定の規則に従って分類するコンテンツ分類ステップと、各分類部に依存チャネルを割り当てるチャネル割当ステップと、各分類部に分けされた記憶コンテンツを該当する依存チャネル上に配列するコンテンツ配列ステップと、ユーザによるチャンネル選択操作及びチャネル上でコンテンツ選択操作を受容するユーザ操作ステップと、前記ユーザ操作ステップを介したユーザ操作に応答して、選択された依存チャネルから記憶コンテンツを取り出して提示するコンテンツ提示ステップと、を具備することを特徴とするソフトウェア記憶媒体である。

【0031】本発明の第2の側面に係るソフトウェア記憶媒体は、例えば、CD (Compact Disc) やFD (Floppy Disc) 、MO (Magnetic-Optic Disc) などの磁気自在可搬性の記憶媒体である。あるいは、ネットワーク(ネットワークは無線、有線の区別を問わない)などの伝送媒体などを駆使してコンピュータ・ソフトウェアを特定のコンピュータ・システムに提供することも技術的に可能である。

【0032】このようなソフトウェア記憶媒体は、コンピュータ・システム上で所定のコンピュータ・ソフトウェアの機能を実現するための、コンピュータ・ソフトウェアと記憶媒体との構造上又は機能上の協調的関係を定義したものである。換言すれば、本発明の第2の側面に係るソフトウェア記憶媒体を介して所定のコンピュータ・ソフトウェアをコンピュータ・システムにインストールすることによって、コンピュータ・システム上で協働的作用が発現される結果、本発明の第1の側面に係るコンテンツ検索・提示システム又は方法と同様の作用効果を得ることができる。

[0037] 本発明は、膨大な記録装置中からある特定のコンテンツを探し出すというよりも、むしろ、記録するだけで再生されることなく受磁されがちな多数のコンテンツを手軽に再生することができる。したがって、仮想チャンネルを複数方向に、時間軸方向に設定することにより、各記録コンテンツを2次元平面上に割り当てることができる。言い換れば、上下及び左右の2方向における位置をアドレスすることによって任意の記録コンテンツを指定することができる。また、上下及び左右の各方向のカーソル移動操作を、それぞれチャンネル選択とチャンネル上での時間軸方向の移動に割り当ることによって、チャンネル選択というTV受像機において慣れ親しんだ操作によって、各分類の中からコンテンツを簡単に選択することができる。

[0038] さらに、各分類に含まれるコンテンツを、仮想チャンネル上で放映される番組として扱い、自動又はマニュアルによる番組選択手段を提供することができ。このような場合、仮想チャンネルの選択から未来に至る番組再生順位を規定して、各分類に属する各コンテンツを時間軸上にマッピングすることができる。ユーザは、実行中のアプリケーション・プログラムがデータを時間軸上にマッピングすることができる。したがって、各仮想チャンネルにおいて、時間軸方向の移動操作により、現在再生中のコンテンツを一時停止したり、あるいはその前のコンテンツの頭出しをして再生を開始させることができ。これは、新聞の画面に見られるテレビ番組表をユーザーの頭の中で想定させながら、ある局が取り決めた放送スケジュールに沿って過去・現在・未来に放映される番組を巡回することに類似する。このようなコンテンツ監索作業は、從来のTVユーザーにも容易に理解され、操作様式を簡単に習得することができるものと思料する。

[0039] 例えば、從来のリモコンやビデオ再生機などにおいては既見される十字形状のキーにおける上下及び左右の各方向の操作をチャンネル選択と時間軸選択に割り当てることができる。このような場合、ユーザは、指を十字キーの格中央に据えたまま、視線をTV画面から外すことなしに、チャンネル選択並びに仮想チャンネル上のコンテンツ選択を容易且つ最早く行うことができる。十字キーを用いたコンテンツ選択操作は、コンテンツ表が選択する場合に比し、操作が簡素且つ早く行うことができる。

[0040] 各分類に属する各チャンネルにおけるコンテンツの再生順などの番組構成は、ユーザの嗜好やユーザー・プロファイルなどのデータを基にして自動的に生成することができる。例えば、ユーザの閲覧度や重要度の高いコンテンツを優先してコンテンツ再生順を決定し後述する本発明の実施例や添付する図面に基づくより詳細な説明によって明らかになるであろう。

[0041] 【発明の実施の形態】以下、図面を参照しながら本発明の実施例や添付する図面によつて本発明の実施例を詳解する。

[0042] 図1には、本発明の実施に供されるコンテンツ・タイムラインの表示例を示す。この結果、本実施例に於て取り出された画面コンテンツをそのまま視聴しても、ユーザの期待から外れることのないコンテンツ提示を行うことができる。

[0043] 本実施例に於けるコンテンツ・タイムラインは、各放送局から時々刻々と放送される放送番組(放送コンテンツ)の録画サービスを行う他、ユーザの画面指示やその再生指示を発行する(あるいは、明

[0049] デコーダ53は、トランスポート・ストリームから分離されたデータを、バス50経由でCPU11に転送する。CPU11では、所定のアリケーションによってデータ放送用データの処理を行い、EPG画面の作成などに利用することができる。

[0044] コントローラとしてのCPU(Central Processing Unit)11が、バス50を介して各ハードウェア・コンポーネントと相互接続して、各コンポーネントに対して統括的な制御を実行するようになっている。以下、コンテンツ録画・再生システム10の各部について説明する。

[0045] アンテナ(図示しない)で受信された放送波は、チューナ51に供給される。放送波は、規定のフォーマットに従つており、例えば番組ガイド情報(EPG: Electric Program Guide)等を含んでよい。

放送波は、地上波、衛星波、有線、無線の区別を問わない。

[0046] チューナ51は、CPU11からの指示に従い、所定チャネルの放送波のチューニングすなわち選局を行い、後続の放送機器52に受信データを出力する。放送機器52では、デジタル変調されている受信データを復調する。なお、送信されてくる放送波がアナログかデジタルかに応じて、チューナ11の構成を適宜更又は拡張することができる。

[0047] 例えばデジタル衛星放送の場合、放送波から受信・復調されたデータとが多重化されて構成される。このようにして、データは、MPEG2(Moving Picture Experts Group 2)圧縮されたAVデータと、データを構成するサービスをそのまま享受することができる。

[0048] アリケーション・データ又はマルチメディア・データによって構成される仮想的な番組は、インタクティブによって構成される仮想的な番組は、一般的に不定である。したがって、仮想的な番組構成として実行時間は定まらず実行順だけが決定される。このような場合、実行途中で別のチャンネルに切り替え、一定時間(又は不定時間)経過後に同一のチャンネルに戻ってきたとき、前回チャンネルを切り替える直前の時点・状態・場所からコンテンツ再生が再開されるようになりますにより、視聴者は違和感なくチャンネルの切り替え操作を行うことができ、また、切り替え操作により提示されるコンテンツを受け取ることができる。

に対して多数の録画コンテンツの検索・提示サービスを行うことができる。コンテンツ録画・再生システム10は、AV機器の1つとして実装することができ、例えば、セットトップボックス(STB)のようなテレビ受信機と一体で構成することができる。

[0044] コントローラとしてのCPU(Central Processing Unit)11が、バス50を介して各コンポーネントと相互接続して、各コンポーネントに対して統括的な制御を実行するようになっている。以下、ユーザ・インターフェース制御部56は、ユーザからの入力操作を処理するモジュールであり、例えば、ユーザが直接マニュアル操作するための操作ボタン(ソリューション)や、赤外線(IR)などを介してリモコン60からの監視操作を受容する機能を備えている。また、現在の設定内容を表示するための表示パネルやLEDインジケータ(図示しない)を含んでよい。

[0045] CPU(Central Processing Unit)11は、コンテンツ録画・再生システム10全体の動作を統括するメイン・コントローラであり、オペレーティング・システム(OS)によって提供されるプラットフォーム上で各箇所のアプリケーションを実行することができる。

[0046] RAM(Random Access Memory)12は、CPU11の実行プログラム・コードをロードしたり、実行プログラムの作成データを書き込むために使用される。また、ROM(Read Only Memory)13は、コンテンツ録画・再生システム10の電源投入時に実行する自己診断・初期化プログラムや、ハードウェア操作用の初期コードなどを恒久的に格納する読み出し専用モードである。

[0047] IEEE1394インターフェース15は、数10Mbps程度のデータ送受信が可能なシリアル高速インターフェースである。IEEE1394ポートには、IEEE1394対の外部機器をデバイシーチェーン接続又はツリーリング接続することができる。IEEE1394対応機器としては、例えば、ビデオ・カメラ64やチャーチャ(図示しない)などが挙げられる。

[0048] ハード・ディスク装置(HDD)17は、プログラムやデータなどを所定フォーマットのファイル形式で蓄積することができる。ランダム・アクセス可能な外部記憶装置であり、例えば數十GB程度(又は10GB以上)の大容量を持つ。HDD17は、ハード・ディスク・インターフェース18を介してバス50に接続されている。本発明を実現する上で、大容量の外部記憶装置はハード・ディスク装置に特に限定されないが、高速なランダム・アクセスが可能であることがより好ましい。

[0049] CPU11は、リモコン60やU/1制御部56を介したユーザ・コマンドに応答して、コンテンツの録画指示やその再生指示を発行する(あるいは、明

に記載の録画コンテンツの録画サービスを行う他、ユーザの画面指示やその再生指示を発行する(あるいは、明

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に記載の録画コンテンツの録画サービスを行う他、ユーザの画面指示やその再生指示を発行する(あるいは、明

示的なユーザ・コマンドの有無に随わらず、常時駆動動作を行ってもよい)。

100571 駆動動作時には、仲間処理前の MPEG 2 ストリームがデータカード 3 から HDD 17 に転送される。データ転送方式は、PIO (プログラム I/O) 転送方式、DMA (Direct Memory Access) 転送方式など、特に既定されない、HDD 17 上では、仮想チャンネル名、時系列に従って (例えば再生開始順に従って)、

駆動された各放送コンテンツが接続される。但し、コンテンツの解処理方法については後に詳説する。

100581 また、映画コンテンツを再生すると同時に、HDD 17 から取り出された MPEG 2 ストリームがバスク 50 通过でデータカード 3 に転送される。データカード 3 では、受信時と同様に、圧縮映像データと圧縮音声データとに分離し、MPEG 2 伸長処理する。再生処理するときにバスクデータに従元し、再生開始順に従って (例えば再生開始順に従って)、

駆動された各放送コンテンツが接続される。但し、コンテンツの解処理方法については後に詳説する。

100591 データカード 3 がデータカード 3 に転送される。データカード 3 とデータカード 18 は、CPI 1 が発行する権利命令に従ってコンピュータ画面を生成する専用コントローラであり、例えば SVGA (Super Video Graphic Array) や XGA (Extended Graphic Array) 相当の機能能力を持つ。グラフィック処理コントローラ 18 は、例えば GPU 1 操作画面や EPG (電子画面) を描画処理することができる。

100601 データカード 4 によって MPEG 2 伸長処理して拡充された再生映像と、グラフィック処理コントローラ 18 によって生成されたコンピュータ画像を組み合わせて処理するときには、コンボーザ 57 によって 2 以上の画面の合成処理が行われる。

100611 上述したように、ハード・ディスク装置 1 には、受信された数多くの放送コンテンツが蓄積されている。図 2 には、ハード・ディスク装置 17 上におけるコンテンツ記録マップを概要的に示している。

100621 記録マップ上では、各記録コンテンツは仮想チャンネルに分類されることとともに、各仮想チャンネル上に記録コンテンツが現実又は仮想的な時間軸上に配列されている。図 2 に示す例では、最初にチャンネルが、機器に記録された放送チャンネルによって、一種の番組表が記述されている。図 2 に示す例では、下から第 1 行目の NHK 局並びに第 2 行目の A.B.C 局は現実の放送チャンネルであるが、下から第 3 行目以降の X 局、Y 局、Z 局…は、コンテンツ記録・再生システム 10 上で仮想的に設定 (番組編成) された仮想チャンネルであるとすると。

100641 現実の放送チャンネルの欄は、例えばデータ送信における EPG から抽出したデータを使用して編集することができる。

100651 各仮想チャンネルにはコンテンツの分類が割り当てられており、各コンテンツは該当する仮想チャンネル上で録画される (又は録画されたコンテンツが配列される)。コンテンツの分類方法は、デフォルトの分類方法、又は、ユーザの好みやその他のプロファイル情報などに基づいた分類方法であってもよい。

100661 各チャンネル上では、該当するそれぞれのコンテンツが時系列に従って (例えば再生開始順に従って) 配列される。現実の放送チャンネルにおける時間軸は現実の時間軸に一致することが、ユーザの隠喩や隠喩操作を防止する上で好ましい。これに対し、仮想チャンネル上では、現実の時間軸を使用する必要は必ずしもなく、仮想的な時間軸であってもよい。

100671 各仮想チャンネル上 (すなわち各ノード) では、記録コンテンツを必要度やユーザの閲覧頻度によってソートイングしたり、あるいはゴーリング (ゴーリング) によって、各記録コンテンツを集中して配列するなどして任意の記録コンテンツを適用することができる。このような番組編成操作を行った結果、仮想チャンネル上の時間軸は現実の放送時間とは一致しない仮想的なものとなる。仮

想チャンネルの生成方法については後に詳説する。

100681 図 2 に示すような、番組予定表のような構成を備えたコンテンツ記録マップ上では、各記録コンテンツは 2 次元平面上に割り当てられているので、上下及び左右の各方向にカーソル移動操作を、チャンネル選択と時間軸方向の移動に割り当てるによって、任意の記録コンテンツを指定することができる。

100691 このようなコンテンツ記録マップ上では、上下及び左右の各方向のカーソル移動操作を、チャンネル選択や番組予定表の操作においては、各ノードの各方向にカーソルキー、下方移動キー、上方移動キー、並びに、右方移動キーが配設されている。したがって、ユーザは、ホームボタン (Home) に指先を置いておくことで、操作パネルを常に目視しなくとも (すなわち、TV 画面から目隠しを外さなくても)、所望方向のカーソル・キーを指先で探し当ててキー操作を行うことができる。

100701 一般には、リモコンやセットトップボックス上に配設された上下 (+/-) キーを操作することによって、チャンネル番号を 1 フィンクリメント又はデクリメントして選択することができる。例えば、コンテンツ画面・再生システム 10 において、チャンネル番号 12 が選択されている状態で、上方移動 (+) キーを 1 回押すたびに、チャンネル番号 13 (すなわち仮想チャンネル X)、チャンネル番号 14 (すなわち仮想チャンネル Y)、チャンネル番号 15 (すなわち仮想チャンネル Z) へと、順次チャンネルが遷移していく。さらにもう 1 回上方移動キーを押下すると、チャンネル番号 1 に復帰することができる。

100711 図 2 に示すようなコンテンツ記録マップ構成は、論理的な記録構造であり、ハード・ディスク上における記録構造と一致する必要はない。

100721 ハード・ディスク上では、例えば FAT (File Allocation Table) 3 などのファイル・システムによって、ファイル管理が行われる。

100731 図 3 には、本実施例に適用されるリモコンシステム 10 上で放送的に割り当てられた仮想チャンネルを含めることができる。図 2 に示す例では、下から第

したがって、ユーザは、通常のチャンネル選択と同等の操作によって、仮想チャンネルの観覧をなわちハード・ディスク装置 17 からのコンテンツ再生を指示することができる。

100741 現実の放送チャンネルに使用されていない数字キーを仮想チャンネル用に割り当てることが好ましい。図 3 に示す例では、1~15 の合計 15 個の数字キーが用意されている。また、図 2 に示す例では、現実の放送局である NHK 局に対してチャンネル番号 1 が、ABC 局にはチャンネル番号 4 がそれぞれ割り当てられており、また、図 2 に示す例では、現実の放送された仮想チャンネル X、Y 及び Z の各々に対して、現実の時間軸と並んで、番号 1~15 の各数字キーと決定 (Enter) キーしか割り当てられない。

100751 カーソル・キー群は、ホーム・ボーションキー (Home) を除いて、その上下及び左右の各方向に上方移動キー、下方移動キー、左方移動キー、並びに、右方移動キーが配設されている。したがって、ユーザは、ホームボタン (Home) に指先を置いておくことで、操作パネルを常に目視しなくとも (すなわち、TV 画面から目隠しを外さなくても)、所望方向のカーソル・キーを指先で探し当ててキー操作を行うことができる。

100761 一般には、リモコンやセットトップボックス上に配設された上下 (+/-) キーを操作することによって、チャンネル番号を 1 フィンクリメント又はデクリメントして選択することができる。例えば、コンテンツ画面・再生システム 10 において、チャンネル番号 12 が選択されている状態で、上方移動 (+) キーを 1 回押すたびに、チャンネル番号 13 (すなわち仮想チャンネル X)、チャンネル番号 14 (すなわち仮想チャンネル Y)、チャンネル番号 15 (すなわち仮想チャンネル Z) へと、順次チャンネルが遷移していく。さらにもう 1 回上方移動キーを押下すると、チャンネル番号 1 に復帰することができる。

100771 ここで、ハード・ディスク装置 17 上で、図 2 に示すように番組編成された放送における、図 3 に示す操作パネルを介したチャンネル選択操作や早送り/巻き戻し操作について考証してみる。

100781 現在時刻が 8：15 であるとき、現実の放送局 NHK では番組 N 3 を、ABC 局では A 3 を、それそれ放送している。

100791 この時刻において、NHK 局を選局中に、上方移動キーを押下すると、N 3 (1ch) →…→ A 3 (4ch) →…→ X 3 (13ch) → Y 3 (14ch) → Z 2 (15ch) → N 3 (1ch) →…という順に、各番組の受信番号 (ハード・ディスク) から再生が行われる。

100801 例論、上方移動キー又は下方移動キーを用いてチャンネル番号に選択チャンネルを選択していくと、番組 Y 3 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択されることで、次の番組 Y 4 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択されるが、さもなく右方移動キーを押下すると次の番組 Y 5 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択される。逆に、番組 Y 3 を再生している状態で、左方移動キーを 1 回押下することで、番組 Y 2 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択され、さもなく 1 回右方移動キーを押下すると次の番組 Y 4 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択される。逆に、番組 Y 3 を再生している状態で、左方移動キーを押下することで、番組 Y 2 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択され、さもなく右方移動キーを 1 回押下すると次の番組 Y 3 の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択される。

100811 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。逆に、番組番号を用いて各番組の開始ポイント (前回押下) が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100821 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100831 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100841 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100851 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100861 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100871 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100881 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100891 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100901 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100911 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100921 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

100931 例論、左方移動キー又は右方移動キーを用いて各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) を選択していくと、番組番号が選択され、各番組の番組番号 (番組番号) が選択される。

返却料金 額(円)	返却料金 名(ROMAJI)	借出ID (ID)	書類名 (NAME)	開始時間 (ST)	再生時間 (DT)	774-10 (DATE)
13	X	X-1	...	6:30	30:00	X71/6#1
13	X	X-2	...	7:00	50:00	X71/6#2
14	Y	Y-1	...	6:00	1:40:00	Y71/6#1
14	Y	Y-2	...	7:40	20:00	Y71/6#2
15	Q	Q-1	...	7:00	2:00:00	Q71/6#1
15	Q	Q-2	...	8:00	2:00:00	Q71/6#2

10117) 仮想チャンネル管理データーブルでは、各番組識別子(VCNUM)に1つのレコードが用意される。各レコードは、仮想チャンネル番号(VCNAME)、番組識別子(PID)、番組名(PNAME)、番組開始時間(PST)及び再生時間(FPT)、番組ファイル名(VCUR)、番組コンテンツを格納したファイル名(VCFILE)、仮想チャンネル・タイプ(C-TYPE)、仮想チャンネル・タイプ(P-F1)を書き込むための各フィールドを含んでいる。このような仮想チャンネル管理データーブルは、例えばデータ放送で配信されるEPGを基にして生成することができると。

[10118] がまぐはくは、仮想チャンネル管理データーブル上では、チャンネル番号並びに開始時間が界り線となるよう、レコードが整列されている。例えば、任意の時間範囲にリモコン60の操作パネル上である仮想チャンネル管理データーブルは、例えばデータ放送で配信されるEPGを基にして生成することができると。

[0134] また、右キー入力時の処理を実行するには（ステップS8）、右キー入力時のキー押下を実行する（ステップS25）。同様に、左キー入力時のキー押下を実行する（ステップS29）、左キー入力時の処理を実行する（ステップS26）。左右各キー入力時の処理の詳細な手順については別途図10及び図11に示しているが、その説明は後述に譲る。

[0135] また、押下されたキーが電源オフである場合には（ステップS11）、システム1.0の電源を遮断して、本処理ルーチン全体を終了する。

[0136] また、上記以外のキーが押下された場合には、キーに割り付けられている機能を呼び出してその他の所定の処理を実行する（ステップS12）。但し、この場合に行われる処理は、本発明の要旨と直接関連ないので、本明細書中では省いて説明しない。

[0137] 次いで、ファイル再生プロセスから再生完

番組ID (PVID)	764610 (PVID)	771610 (PVID)	771610 (PVID)	771610 (PVID)	771610 (PVID)	771610 (PVID)
Q1	qf1 61	AG	DQ1,	—	—	—
Q2	qf1 62	AO	DQ2,	DQ2,	DQ2,	DQ2,

[10122] メタデータは、1つの番組内をシーン単位に区切り、重要度や出版シーンに則する情報（例えは出版者や内容など）を記述することができる。番組メタデータは、データ・テーブルでは、番組内の各シーン毎に1つのレコードが用意される。各レコードは、番組識別子（P1 ID）、ファイル識別子（PFD）、番組内のシーン番号（PSN）、シーンの始点タイムコード（PST）、並びに終点タイムコード、重要度、評価情報（Decree Rating）を書き込むための各フィールドを含んでいる。

[10123] 放送コンテンツやアプリケーションの提供

業者（あるいは関連サービス提供業者）は、あらかじめこのようなメタデータを制作しておくとともに、データ放送やインターネットなどを伝送媒体にしてメタデータを有料又は無料で配信してもらい、[図3]また、以下の[図3]には、アプリケーションに割り当てられた仮想チャネルのため、アプリケーション・プログラムとデータの対応関係を記述したロックアップ・テーブルの構造を模式的に示している。

でユーザが押下したキーを取得する（ステップS4）。

[0130] 上方移動キーが押下された場合には（ステップS5）、まず現チャンネル値CCを1だけインクリメントして（ステップS18）、CCが最大チャンネル値MAXCCに到達したか否かを判定する（ステップS19）。

9) CCがMAXCCに到達した場合には、CCを最小チャンネル値MINCCに戻す（ステップS20）。

[0131] また、下方移動キーが押下された場合には（ステップS6）、まず現チャンネル値CCを1だけデクリメントして（ステップS21）、CCが最小チャンネル値MINCCに到達したか否かを判定する（ステップS22）。

する(ステップS14)。仮想チャンネルの再スケジュール処理の詳細手順については別途図12に示しているが、その説明は後述に譲る。

[0139]次いで、仮想チャネル管理テーブル(表2を参照のこと)から現チャンネル上で再生中の番組の次にスケジュールされている番組の識別子(PID)を取得する(ステップS15)。そして、次の番組のPIDに該当する番組ファイル(PFID)の再生処理を実行する(ステップS16)。番組ファイルの再生処理の詳細な手順については別途図8に示しているが、その説明は後述に譲る。

うち、ステップS3において行われるチャンネル・タイプが"A"の詳細な処理手順をフローチャートの形式で示している。チャンネル変更処理は、呼び出されたときに仮想チャンネルの再生を行っていた場合はその再生終了処理を行ってから、其チャンネルの選択又は仮想チャンネルの選択処理に進む。以下、図6に示すフローチャートについて説明する。

【0141】まず、再生中フラグPFがセットされているか否かを確認する(ステップS31)。

【0142】再生中フラグPFがセットされている場合は、現在チャンネル上でオンエア中の番組又は再生されている番組のチャンネル・タイプをチェックする(ステップS32)。この処理は、該当する番組識別子(PID)のレコードを仮想チャンネル管理テーブル(表1)を参照のこと)で検索して、そのチャンネル・タイプを参照することで行われる。

【0143】チャンネル・タイプが"A"であれば、当該アプリケーションのウインドウを非表示にして(ステップS33)、当該アプリケーション・プロセスの優先順位を下げて、バックグラウンドとし(バックグラウンド・シグナルを発行)ステップS34)、再生中フラグPFを解除する(ステップS35)。

【0144】また、チャンネル・タイプが"V"であれば、現チャンネル上で再生されている番組の再生プロセス終了シグナルを発行して(ステップS36)、仮想チャンネルの再スケジュール処理を行う(ステップS37)。仮想チャンネルの再スケジュール処理の詳細な手順については別途図12に示しているが、その説明は後述する。

【0145】ステップS31においてPFがセットされていると判断されたとき、ステップS35でPFを解除した後、あるいは、ステップS37において仮想チャンネルの再スケジュール処理を終了した後、ステップS3に進んで、現在選択されているチャンネルがオンエア中の番組識別子、再生プロセスがオンエアチャンネルの再スケジュールが選択されている場合には、其チャンネルから否かを判断する。

【0146】オフチャネルが選択されている場合には、チューナ5にに対して仮想チャンネル値CCを選択するよう、チャンネル変更指示を発行することによって(ステップS40)、バス50をチューナ出力の表示状態(すなわち、オンエア中の放送コンテンツを伝送可能な状態)に設定して(ステップS41)、本処理ルーチン全体を終了する。

【0147】他方、実チャンネルが選択されていない、すなわち仮想チャンネルが選択されている場合には、仮想ルーチン全体を終了する。

【0148】図7には、仮想チャンネルの選択処理の詳細な処理手順をフローチャートの形式で示している。仮想チャンネルの選択処理では、当該仮想チャンネルに含まれる番組の中で、現在時刻に再生すべき番組を絞り

イルを特定してその再生処理に進む。以下、図7に示すフローチャートに従って説明する。

【0149】まず、システム・クロックより現在時刻(CT)を取得する(ステップS51)。

【0150】次いで、仮想チャンネル管理テーブル(表1を参照のこと)の中から、下式[数1]を満たすよう(CT)に該当する番組のファイル識別子(PFID)を検索する(ステップS52)。

【0151】

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[数1] VC NUM == CC
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且つ、PST<CT<PST+PDUR

【0152】さらに、仮想チャンネル管理テーブルを検索した結果、現チャンネル値CCに該当する仮想チャンネル番号VCNUMが存在するか否かを判別する(ステップS53)。

【0153】該当する仮想チャンネル番号が存在する場合には、ステップS52により取得された番組ファイル識別子PFIDに相当する番組ファイルの再生処理を実行する(ステップS54)。番組ファイルの再生処理の詳細な手順については別途図8に示しているが、その説明は後述に譲る。

【0154】他方、該当する仮想チャンネル番号が存在しない場合には、選択されたチャンネル番号CCとともに無番号画面を表示する(ステップS55)。これは、通常のテレビ受信機において、オンエア中の放送局が割り当てられていないチャンネルを選択したときの表示画面のメタファを持つ。

【0155】図8には、図5に示す基本処理ルーチンのうちステップS16、並びに、図7に示す仮想チャンネル選択処理ルーチンのうちステップS54において行われる番組ファイル再生処理の詳細な処理手順をフローチャートの形式で示している。番組ファイル再生処理で、再生開始点と終了点を指定して、システム1内に再生開始点と終了点を指定した後、ステップS3に進んで、現在選択されているチャンネルがオンエア中のチャンネルから否かを判断する。

【0146】オフチャネルが選択されている場合には、チューナ5にに対して仮想チャンネル値CCを選択するよう、チャンネル変更指示を発行することによって(ステップS40)、バス50をチューナ出力の表示状態(すなわち、オンエア中の放送コンテンツを伝送可能な状態)に設定して(ステップS41)、本処理ルーチン全体を終了する。

【0147】他方、実チャンネルが選択されていない、すなわち仮想チャンネルが選択されている場合には、仮想ルーチン全体を終了する。

【0148】図7には、仮想チャンネルの選択処理の詳細な処理手順をフローチャートの形式で示している。仮想チャンネルの選択処理では、当該仮想チャンネルに含まれる番組の中で、現在時刻に再生すべき番組を絞り

【0159】現チャンネルのチャンネル・タイプが"A"であれば、プログラム型番組ファイルの再生処理を行う(ステップS68)。プログラム型番組ファイルの再生処理の詳細な手順については別途図14に示しているが、その説明は後述に譲る。

【0160】他方、現在再生ボインタCPTCが未だETCに到達していない場合には、假プロセスより終了シグナルが発行されているか否かをチェックする(ステップS6)。

【0170】假プロセスより終了シグナルが発行されているか否かをチェックする(ステップS7)。假プロセスより終了した場合には、本処理ルーチン全体を終了する。また、假プロセスより再生スキンプ・シグナルが発行されているか否かをチェックする(ステップS7)。

【0171】假プロセスより再生スキンプ・シグナルが発行されているか否かをチェックする(ステップS7)。假プロセスより再生スキンプ・シグナルが発行されている場合には、假プロセスより再生スキンプ・シグナルが発行されているか否かをチェックする(ステップS7)。

【0172】再生スキンプ・シグナルが発行されていないければ、ステップS7に進むとして、CPTCがETCに到達するまで、上述と同様の処理を繰り返す。また、再生スキンプ・シグナルが発行されている場合には、假プロセスより再生ボインタのタイムコードCPTCを加算した値を現在再生ボインタのタイムコードCPTCとしてセットする(ステップS64)。また、同ファイルの終点タイムコードを変数ETCにセットする(ステップS65)。

【0173】そして、同ファイルの始点タイムコード(STC)に現在時刻とのオフセット(CT-STC)を加算して、ファイル再生プロセスを起動する(ステップS66)。ファイル再生プロセスの詳細な手順については別途図9に示しているが、その説明は後述に譲る。

【0174】図10及び図11には、リモコン6などとの操作ハンドル上で、右方移動キーが押下操作されたときに行う処理手順をフローチャートの形式で示している。この処理手順は、図5に示した基本プロセスのステップS25に相当する。右方(又は左方)移動キーの押下時間が短いときは直後(又は直前)のシーン開始位置ヘジャンプし、押下時間が長いときには、当該仮想チャンネル選択処理ルーチンのうち、ステップS66において起動されたファイル再生プロセスでは、あるいは、ステップS66におけるファイル再生プロセス起動後に、再生中フラグPFをセットして(ステップS67)、本処理ルーチン全体を終了する。

【0175】図9には、図8に示した番組ファイル再生処理ルーチンのうち、ステップS66において起動されるファイル再生プロセスの詳細な処理手順をフローチャートの形式で示している。ファイル再生プロセスは、再生指示を出すプロセス側から、子プロセスとして生成される。ファイル再生プロセスでは、指定されたファイルの、指定されたポイントからデータ・ストリームを読み出しで、システム1内に設定された再生バス(前述)に流す。ファイル再生プロセスは、再生中のタイムコードを保持する。また、假プロセスから再生位置を変更する際のシグナルを右チャンネル上にオーバーラップする(ステップS82)。この処理は、該当する番組識別子(PID)のレコードを仮想チャンネル管理テーブル(表1)に参照のこと)で検索して、そのチャンネル・タイプを参照すること)で行われる。

【0176】チャンネル・タイプが"V"であれば、次いで、右方移動キーの押下時間が所定時間未満である場合には、次いで、右方移動キーの押下時間が所定時間未満である場合には、番組コードETCと終了する(ステップS83)。

【0177】右方移動キーの押下時間が所定時間未満である場合には、番組コードETCと終了する(ステップS83)。

【0178】現在再生ボインタCPTCと終了する(ステップS72)。

【0179】次いで、現在再生ボインタCPTCと終了する(ステップS73)。

【0180】現在再生ボインタCPTCと終了する(ステップS73)。

3) .

【0218】ステップS147では、PSWAPシグナルが発行されたか否かをチェックする。発行されている場合には、親プロセスから新しいデータ・ファイルの隸属子DFIDを取得して(ステップS148)、該DFIDで指定されるファイルを読み出す(ステップS149)。

【0219】そして、ステップS150において、プロセスの強制終了を指示するk111が発行されたか否かをチェックする(ステップS150)。k111シグナルが発行されていない場合には、ステップS142に戻り、上所述の処理を繰り返し実行する。また、k111シグナルが発行された場合には、アプリケーション・プロセス全体を終了する。

【0220】本実施例では、仮想チャンネル(又は実チャンネル)を表示中のディスプレイ61画面上に、仮想チャンネルの進行状況やスケジュールを表示するためのウインドウを配置してもよい。

【0221】図16には、仮想チャンネル・ウインドウの表示画面例を示している。同図の例では、画面の左下方向にタイム・テーブル形式の仮想チャンネル・ウインドウが表示しており、各番組の再生開始位置や再生時間を確認することができる。また、仮想チャンネル・ウインドウ上には、現在の再生位置を示すインジケーターが表示されしており、視聴者は仮想チャンネルでのスケジュール進行状況や自己の視聴状況を直感的に把握する。

することができる。

(0222) 「追捕」以上、特定の実施例を参照しながら、本発明について詳解してきた。しかしながら、本発明の要旨を説きしない範囲で当著者が該実施例の修正や代用を成し得ることは自明である。

(0223) 本明細書中では、各放送局から放送される放送コンテンツの映像面を行う機器を例にとって説明していくが、本発明の要旨は必ずしもかかる実施様には限られない。例えば、放送コンテンツ以外の映像面や映像以外のコンテンツの記録を行うシステムに対して、本発明を同様に適用することができる。

(0224) 要するに、例示という形態で本発明を開示してきたのであり、既定的に解説されるべきではない。本発明の要旨を判断するためには、冒頭に記載した特許請求の範囲の欄を参考すべきである。

〔発明の効果〕 以上詳記したように、本発明によれば、記憶装置にあらかじめ録画・蓄積しておいたコンテンツを記憶装置から取り出すことができる、優れた記録コンテンツシステム及び方法を提供することが可能となる。

【0226】また、本発明によれば、記憶装置に録画・録音された多数のコンテンツの中からユーザが操作性によく選択できる。優れた記録システムを提供することができる。

【0227】また、本発明によれば、一般的なテレビ受信機におけるチャンネル選択と同等の操作でコンテンツの検索と探し出しができる、優れた記録コンテンツの検索・提示システム及び方法を提供することができる。

【0228】本発明に係る記録コンテンツの検索・提示システム及び方法によれば、映像コンテンツやその他のデータをマルチメディア・コンテンツの選択と、一般的なTVチューナーの選択と同等の操作で行なうことができる。したがって、ユーザは、記録されたコンテンツを選択するための新しい操作様式を獲得する必要がなくなる。また、記録されたコンテンツの製造者は、記録されたコンテンツを選択するための新しい機構を開発した、実装する必須の機能を追加しなくてもよい。すなわち、機器コストが増大しないことによるコスト削減が可能である。

[10229] 本発明に係る記録コンテンツの検索 提示システム及び方法においては、各記録コンテンツを分類するするとともに、各分類に対して仮想チャンネルが割り当てられる。また、各仮想チャンネル上では、コンテンツが現実又は仮想的な時間軸上に配列されている。したがって、仮想チャンネルを複数方向に、時間軸を横軸方向に設定することにより、各記録コンテンツを2次元平面に配置することができる。また、上下及び左右のカーソル移動操作を、チャンネル選択と時間軸方向の移動に割り当てることによって、各チャンネル選択において操作が現れる。したがって、各分類の中からコンテンツを簡単に選択することができます。

[10230] さらに、各分類に含まれるコンテンツを、各分類の各仮想チャンネル上で放映される番組として扱い、自動又はマニュアルによる番組編成手段を提供することができらる。このような場合、仮想チャンネルの過去から未来にかけて、番組再生手順を規定して、同分類の各コンテンツをマッチングすることができる。したがって、時間軸方向の移動操作によつて、番組再生手順の順序が変更される。したがって、番組再生手順の順序が変更される。

これは、新聞の範囲で見られるテレビ番組表をユーザの頭の中で想定せながら、ある局が既に決めて放送スケジュールに沿って過去・現在・未来に類似する番組を巡回することができる。このような

（2.2.6）また、本発明によれば、記憶接続に録画・監視された多数のコンテンツの中からユーザーが操作性よし易いコンテンツを探し出すことができる、優れた記録コンテンツの検索・提示システム及び方法を提供することができる。

（2.2.7）また、本発明によれば、一般的なテレビ受信機におけるチャンネル選択と同等の操作でコンテンツを検索・探し出すことができる、優れた記録コンテンツの検索・提示システム及び方法を提供することができる。

（2.2.8）本発明に係る記録コンテンツの検索・提示システム及び方法によれば、映像コンテンツやその他のデータを視聴するための選択肢を、一般的なTVチャンネルの選択と同等の操作で行うことができる。したがって、ユーザーは、記録されたコンテンツを選択するたびに新たに操作機器の操作手順を習得する必要がなくなる。また、コンテンツ映像機の製造業者は、記録されたコンテンツを監視・選択するための新しい機構を開発したり、実装する必がないし、新しい機構に適合した新しいディバイスや部品を追加しなくともよい。すなわち、機器コストが増大する心配をこれとなくして本発明に提供することができる。

(2.2.9) 本発明に係る記録コンテンツの検索・提示方法においては、各記録コンテンツを分類することとともに、各分類に対して仮想チャネルが割り当たる。また、各仮想チャネル上では、コンテンツ登録又は仮想的な時間軸上に配列されている。したがって、ここで、仮想チャネルを横軸方向に、時間軸を縦軸方向に設定することにより、各記録コンテンツを2次元平面表示することができる。また、検索結果は、上下及び左右の各方向のカーソル移動操作を、チャンネル選択と時間軸方向の移動に割り当てることによって、簡単に選択することができる。

これが、新聞の裏面に見られるテレビ番組をユーワーの頭の中で想定させながら、ある局が競争始めた放送スケジュールに沿って過去・現在・未来に渡って番組を巡回することに類似する。このような

[0231] 例えは、従来のリモコンやビデオ再生機などにおいても倣見される十字形状のキーにおける上下及び左右の各方向の操作をチャンネル選択と時間軸移動に切り替り得ることができる。このような場合、ユーザーは、指を十字キーの路中央に据えただまゝ、視線をTV画面から外さずそのままに仮想チャンネル選択が可能となる。従来のリモコンやビデオ再生機などにおいても倣見される十字形状のキーにおける上下及び左右の各方向の操作をチャンネル選択と時間軸移動に切り替り得ることができる。このような場合、ユーザーは、指を十字キーの路中央に据えただまゝ、視線をTV画面から外さずそのままに仮想チャンネル選択が可能となる。[0232] また、本発明に係るコンテンツの検索・探し方及び表示方法では、仮想チャンネルを用いてコンテンツを分類するだけであり、階層的な分類を行わぬ。したがって、深い階層の場合に起りがちな、どの階層に所属するコンテンツが存在するかが判らぬといったいよいよ事態には陥らない。

本実施例は、ユーザーの興味度や重要度に応じてコンテンツを優先してコンテンツ再生順を決定し、あるいはゴールデンタイムのように視聴率の高いとき、あるいは視聴時間帯に重要なコンテンツを割り当てることができる。

この結果、本実施例に従つて取り出された録画コンテンツをそのまま視聴しても、ユーザーの期待から外れることのないコンテンツ提示を行うことができる。

【0234】本発明は、膨大な記録装置の中からある特定のコンテンツを探し出すというよりも、むしろ、記録するだけではなく再生されることなく死蔵されがちな多数のコンテンツを手軽に再生する場合において、より好適に作用することができる。本発明に係るコンテンツの検索・検索・選択・提示システム及び方法によれば、たまたま面白いコンテンツを発見するなど、從来のテレビ受像機やVTR等に比べてはなかつた楽しみをユーザに与えることができるのである。

【0235】さらに、本発明によれば、TVチャンネルの切り替えと同等の操作でアプリケーション・プログラムの選択を行うことができる。したがって、ユーザは、アプリケーション・プログラムやその起動という、従来のテレビ受像機やその他のAV機器にはない概念を、新規な操作様式を習得することなしに、自然に取り扱うことができる。

系列的(例えば再生開始時)に配列された複数の映像コントンタンクからなる仮想チャンネルにおける番組選択と同等の操作によって、メタデータやマルチメディア・データの選択が可能である。ユーチャーは、実行中のアプリケーションやマルチメディア・データを選択する操作手順を新たに習得する必要がない。また、アプリケーション・プログラムや、メタデータ、マルチメディア・データといった、コンピュータ・システムが提供するサービスをそのまま享受することができる。

【0237】アプリケーションとメタデータ又はマルチメディア・データによつて構成される番組は、インタラクティブに実行されるため、その再生時間は一般に不定である。したがつて、仮想的な番組構成としては、実行時間は定まらず実行順だけが決定される。このような場合、実行途中でチャンネルを切り替え、一定時間経過後同一のチャンネルに戻ってきたとき、前回チャンネルを切り替える直前の時点・状況・場所からコンテナ再生が再開されるようになります。視聴者が

受け容れることができる。

【0238】出荷時・販売時には、コンテンツ配信装置にはまだ何とも記載されていない。あるチャンネルを切めて選んだときに、入力待ちの静的な状態が提示されると、通常のテレビ受像機などにおいてチャンネル切り替え操作を行った場合とは異なる不自然な感覚を覚えてしまう。このような場合のため、初回の仮想チャンネル選択時には、デフォルト・データを使って動的なコンテンツを提示することによって、チャンネル切り替えの自然な感覚を与えることができる。

【0239】また、仮想チャンネル上の番組の情報を示すことに、その番組の前後に配信された番組の情報を示すことで、り、時間軸上の移動操作（例えば左矢印キーの操作）で次にどの番組にジャンプすることができるかを一目で判別するに提示することができ、番組選択の手助けとなる。

【0240】【画面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の実施に供されるコンテンツ画面・再生システム10のハードウェア構成を模式的に示した図である。

【図2】ハード・ディスク装置17におけるコンテンツ・ツリーマップを模式的に示した図である。

【図3】本実験例に適用されるリモコン60（又はU／1制御部55）のユーザ操作パネルの構成例を示した図である。

【図4】本実験例に適用されるリモコン60（又はU／1制御部55）のユーザ操作パネルの他の構成例を示し

た図である。

【図5】本実施例に係るコンテンツ映画・再生システム

10において実行される基本的な処理手順を示したフローチャートである。

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[図6] 図5に示すフローチャートのスケッチに相当するチャンネル変更処理の詳細な手順を示したフロ

ーティーである。

[図7] 図6に示すフローチャート中のステップS39

に相当する仮想チャンネルの選択処理の詳細な処理手順を示すフローチャートである。

19. *Chlorophytum comosum* (L.) Willd. (syn. *Chlorophytum capense* L.)

6. 並びに、図7に示す仮想チャンネル選択処理ルーチン [図8] 図中に示す基本処理ルーチンのうちスナップ1 生開始時刻と再生時刻及び 1 又は再生位置を示すマスクを画面に表示した様子を示した図である。

前述処理の詳細な処理手順を示したフローチャートである。

【図9】図8に示した番組ファイル再生処理ルーチンの

うち、ステップS6において起動されるファイル再生プログラムの階級名を示すフローチャートである。

51…チューイー、52…後輪器
ノードレスヘルメットの上部に装着する。

【図10】リモコン6などの操作パネル上で、左右にスムーズに操作できる。左側の矢印ボタンを押すと、左側の操作パネルが表示される。右側の矢印ボタンを押すと、右側の操作パネルが表示される。

子孫の移動キーが別ト操作されたときに行う處理手順
を示したフローチャートである。

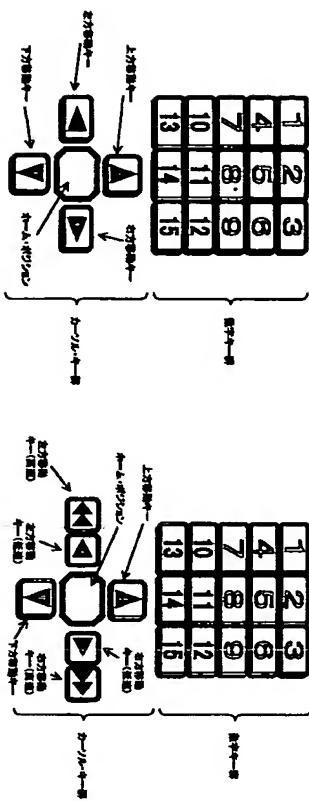
【図11】リモコン60などの操作パネル上で、左右に57...コンポーザ

それがの移動キーが押下操作されたときに行う処理等の二部表示フローをチャートである。

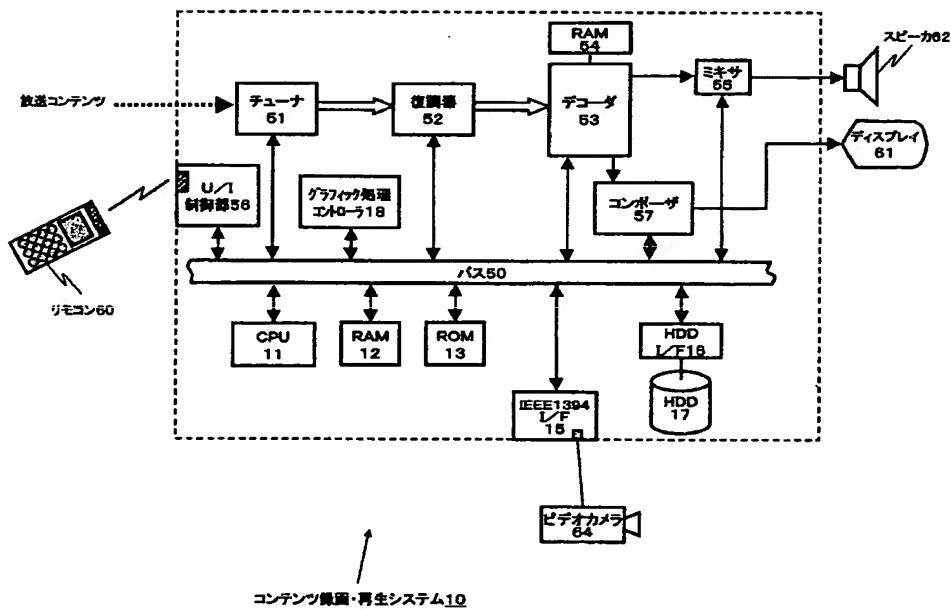
【図1-2】仮想チャンネル再スケジュール処理の詳細な

[卷之三] 〔五〕

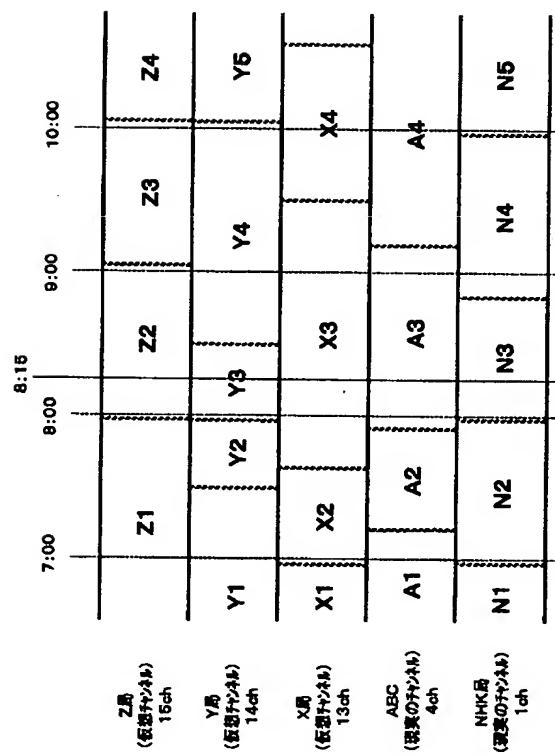
141



[1]

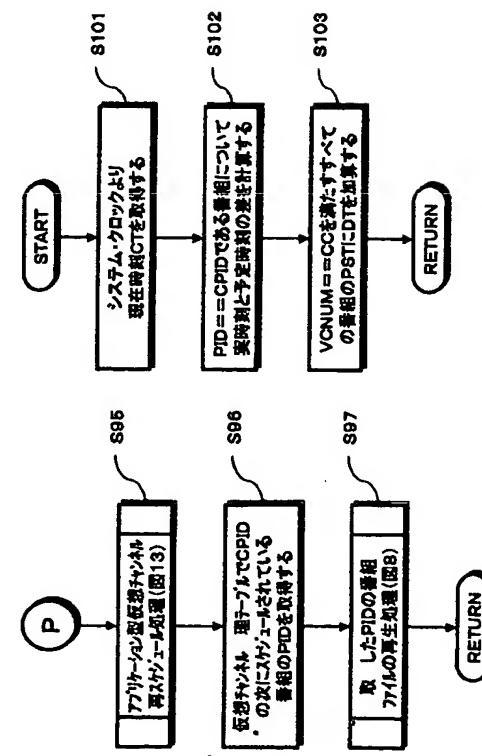


[図2]

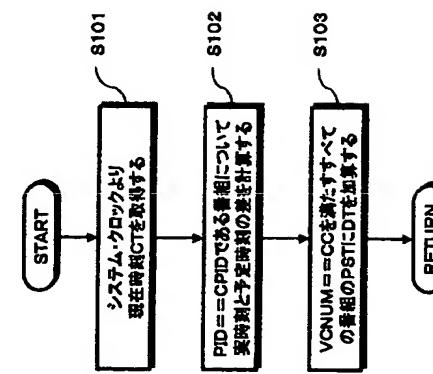


コンテンツ記録マップ

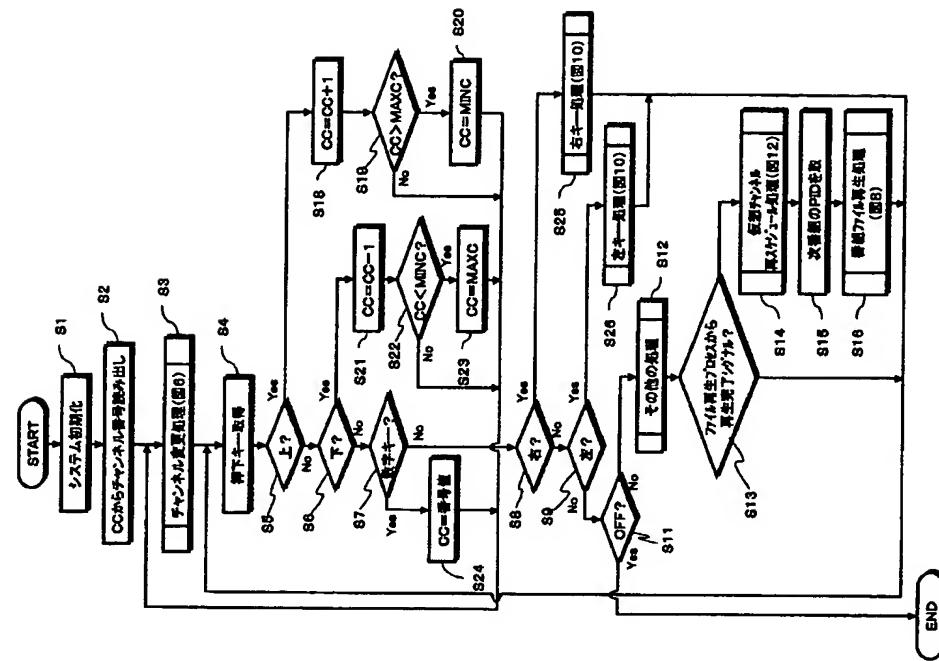
[図11]



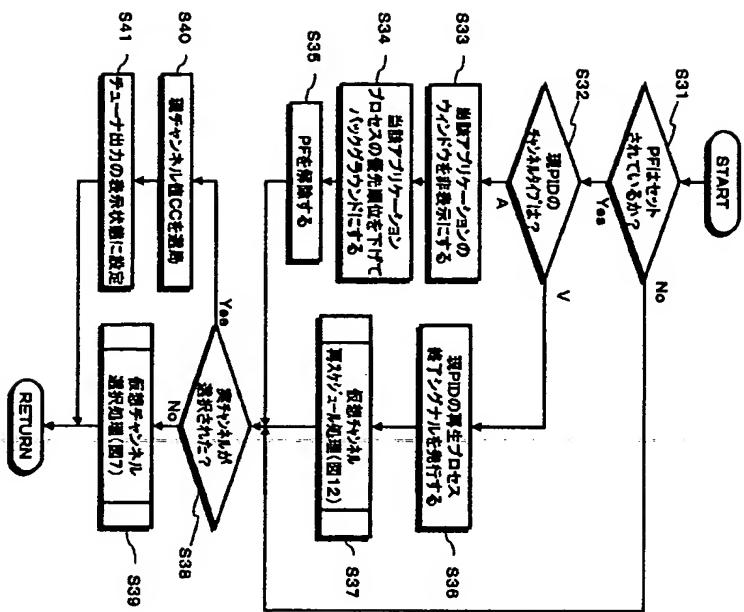
[図12]



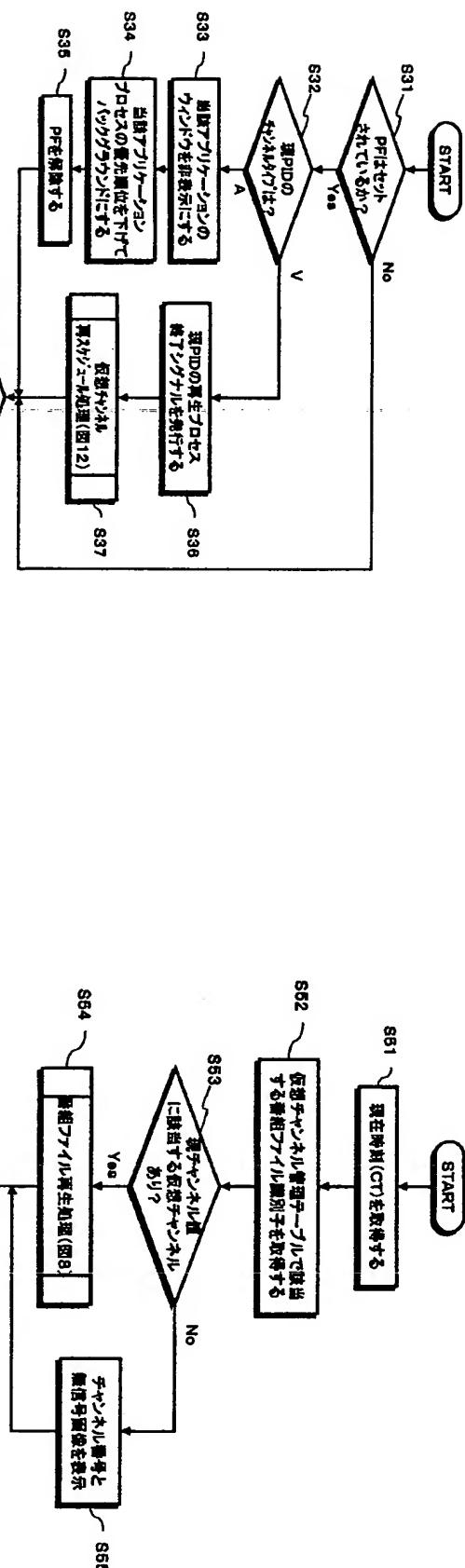
[図5]



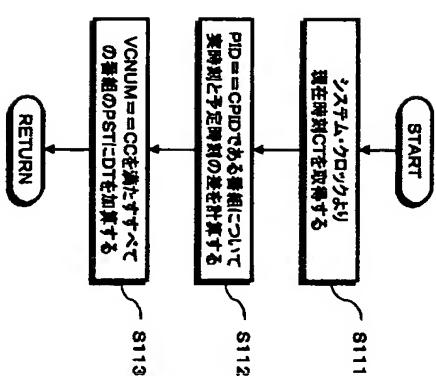
[図6]



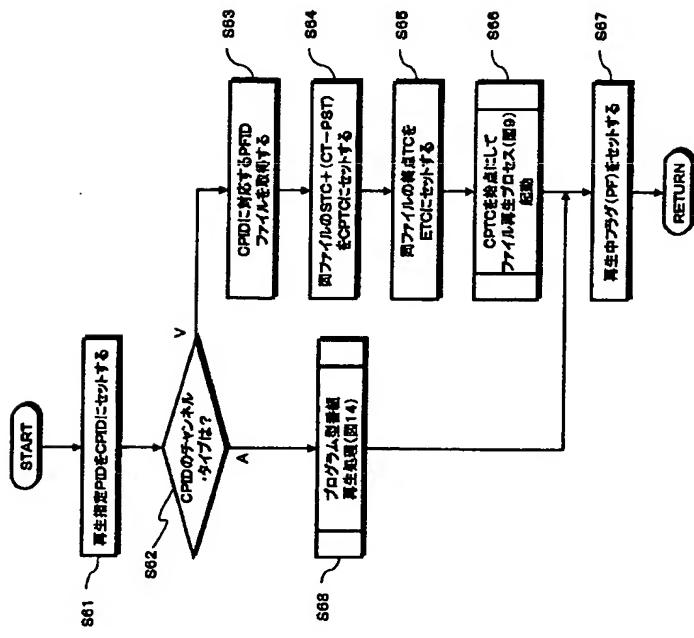
[図7]



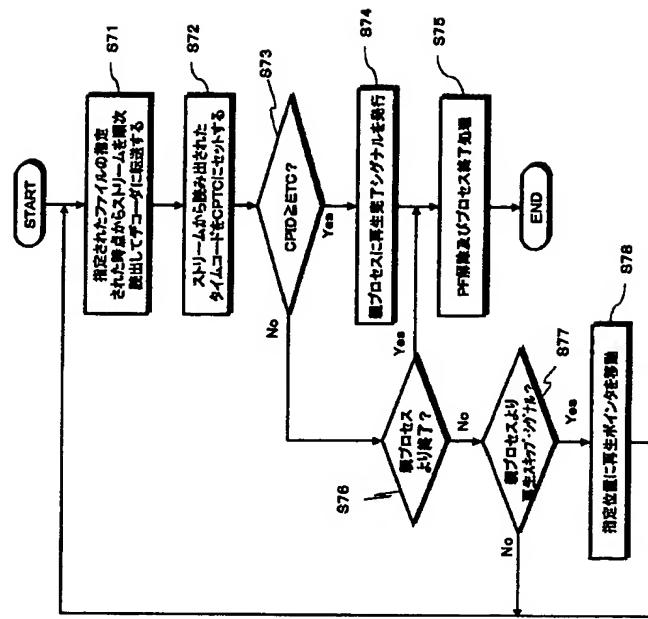
[図13]



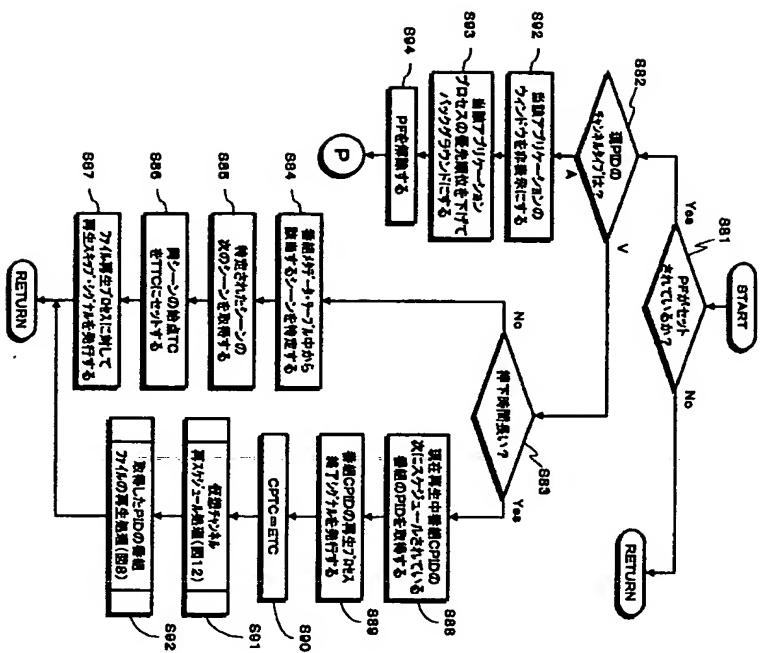
[図8]



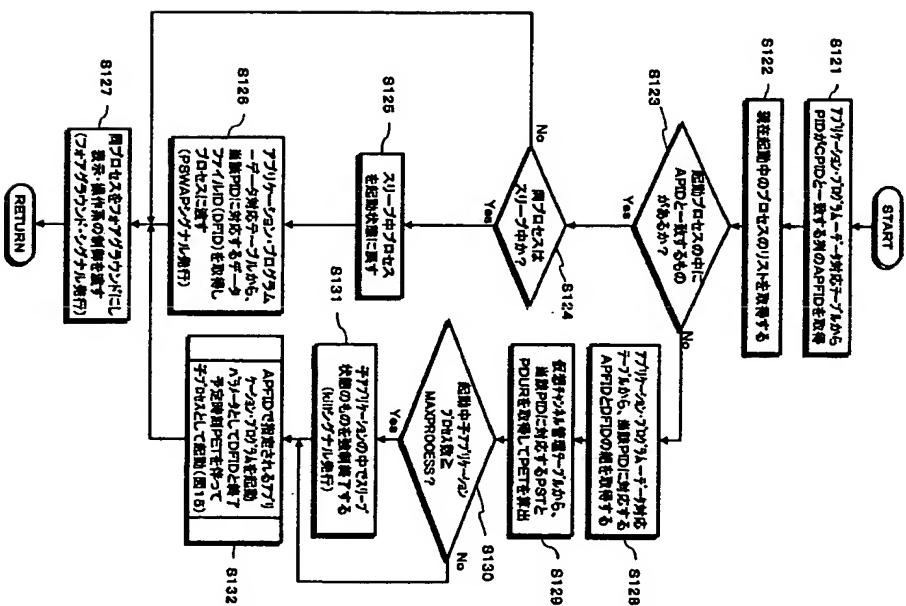
[図9]



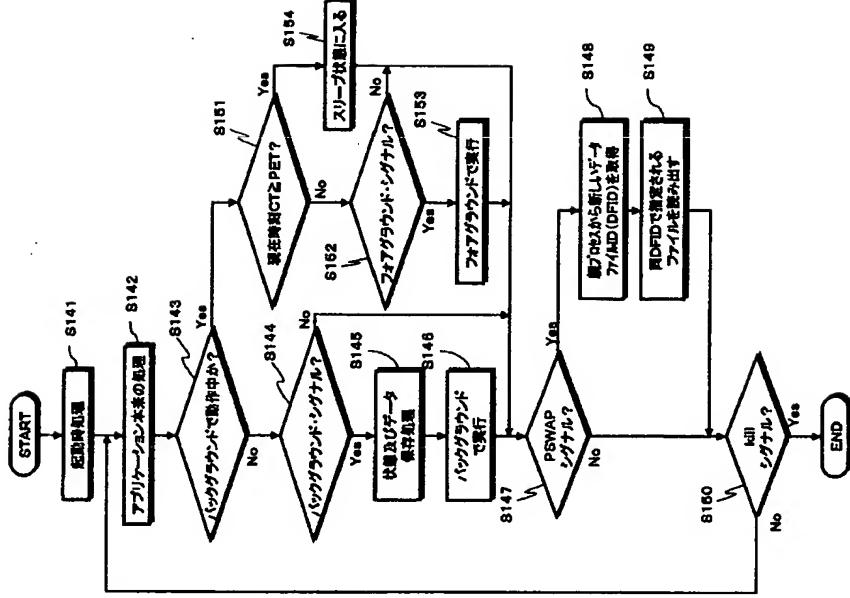
[010]



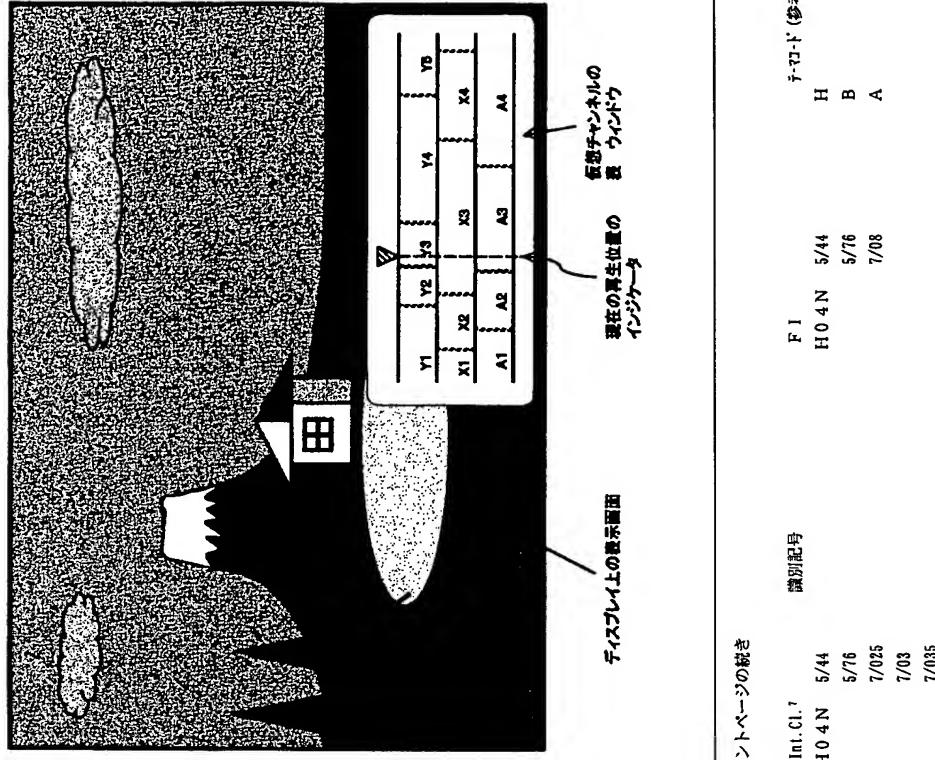
[図14]



[図15]



[図16]



(5) Int.Cl. 7		識別記号	F 1	フロード (参考)
H 0 4 N	5/44		H	
	5/16		B	
	7/025		A	
	7/03			
	7/035			

Fタ-ム(後)	5B075 ND16 NR12 PP13 PQ02 PQ75
	UJ35
5C025	AA23 AA28 BA25 BA28 BA30
CA09	CB08 DA05
5C052	AA01 AB03 AB04 AC08 CC11
	DD04 EB02 EE03
5C063	AA20 AB03 AB07 AC01 AC05
AC10	CA23 DA03 DA07 DA13
EA01	EB33
5D077	AA22 BA04 BA14 CA02 CB06
CB14	CB15 DC03 DC11 DC12
EA01	EA14 GA02